

THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST TECH LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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GADGETS

MAGAZINE

TECH ON THE MOVE

ELEVATING YOUR SUMMER ROAD TRIPS

COVERSTORY Going On An Electric Road Trip • Travel Vlogging 101
Beat the Heat with AI • Modern Travel Platforms

Your life, upgraded



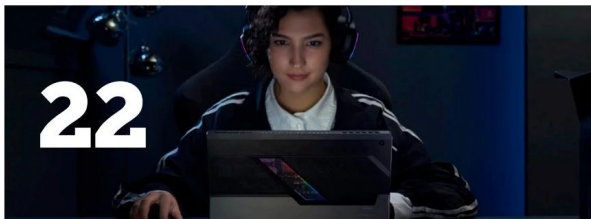
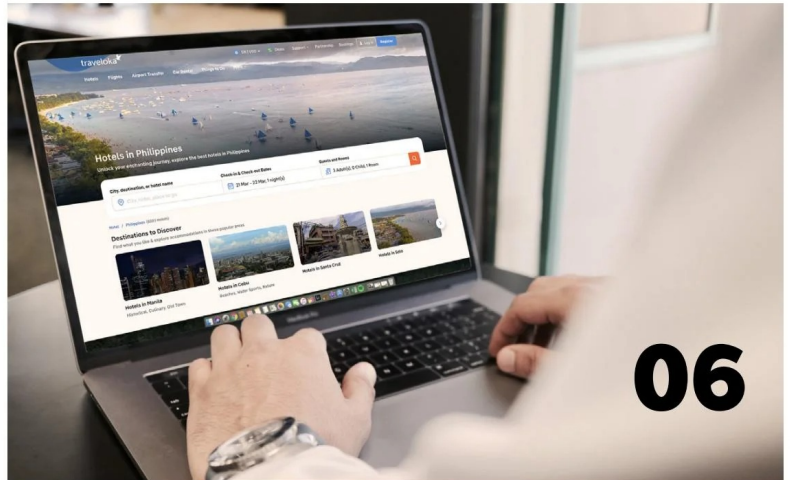
We are more
than just tech

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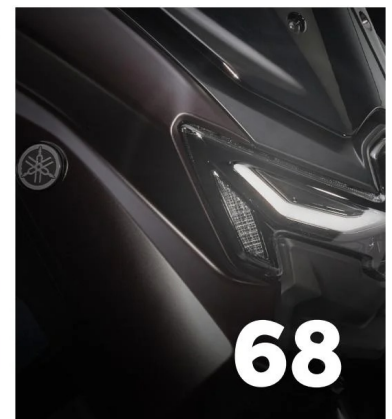
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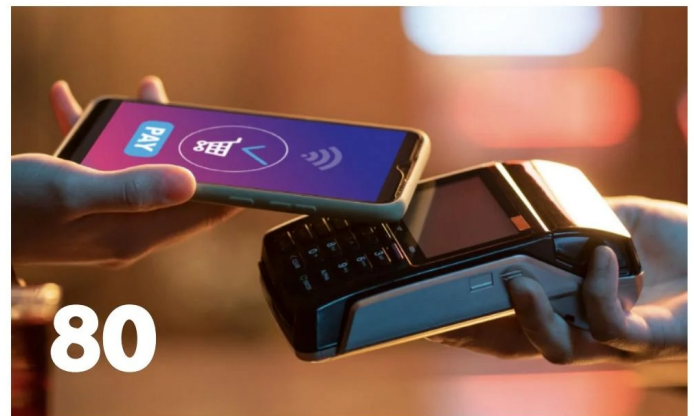
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THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST TECH LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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Words by Gabriel Pe

GOING ON AN ELECTRIC ROAD TRIP

What you need to know for a fully electrified road trip

Electric vehicles (EVs) have surged in popularity over the past year. Brands like BYD, Tesla, Hyundai, and VinFast have introduced fully electric models into the country, making EVs a familiar sight on Philippine roads. For many Filipinos, EVs have become part of their daily commute.

EVs are particularly well-suited for city driving, thanks to their energy regeneration capabilities. They are

also significantly cheaper to operate, as charging costs are generally lower than refueling with gasoline.

However, what makes EVs great for urban environments does not necessarily translate to highway driving. EVs tend to consume more energy on highways since they must continuously maintain speed. Additionally, highway travel provides fewer opportunities for regenerative braking, as there is

typically less stop-and-go traffic to facilitate energy recovery.

While most EVs on the market today have enough range to reach iconic tourist destinations from Metro Manila, range anxiety remains a concern due to the limited charging infrastructure on highways. To ensure a hassle-free road trip, planning is essential. Here's what you need to consider when embarking on an EV road trip.



KNOW YOUR CAR

As with any vehicle, understanding your EV's specifications is crucial before heading out on a road trip. For internal combustion engine (ICE) cars, pre-trip checks include monitoring oil levels, fuel, and tire pressure. With EVs, the preparation process is different but just as important. You need to be aware of your battery health, capacity, weight limits, and charger compatibility.

Charging Standards: Compatibility Matters

Unlike gasoline refueling, EV charging connectors are not standardized globally — or even domestically. The most common charging standards include:

- **Type 1 and CCS Type 1** – Older North American and Japanese models
- **GBT** – China's EV charging standard

- **Type 2 and CCS2** – European standard, the most common in the Philippines
- **Tesla Supercharger Port** – Mainly in North America
- **CHAdeMO DC Standard** – Used in older Japanese models
- **NACS (North American Charging Standard)** – Tesla's new universal standard

In the Philippines, **Type 2 and CCS2 ports** are the most widely available at public charging stations. If your EV uses a different connector, carrying a converter is crucial. However, keep in mind that many service stations with charging facilities do not allow charging with an adapter. Always check in advance to avoid unexpected issues.

Charging Speed and Efficiency

Beyond connector compatibility, understanding your EV's charging speed is essential. Most EVs

support **7kW AC charging**, but premium models can handle up to **22kW AC**.

For faster charging, DC chargers are the best option. Many DC chargers in the Philippines provide up to **180kW**, but this drops to **90kW when shared** between two vehicles. Some high-end EVs can accept up to **300kW**, so knowing your car's maximum charging capacity helps you pick the most efficient station.

Real-World Range vs. Advertised Range

EVs rarely achieve their advertised range due to external factors such as driving style, road conditions, and weather. To estimate your car's actual range, monitor its **daily energy consumption** under normal conditions. This will help you plan for charging stops more accurately and prevent unexpected battery depletion.

PLAN AHEAD

The key to a smooth EV road trip is careful planning. Since the charging infrastructure is still developing, identifying charging points along your route is critical.

Use Route Planning Apps

Fortunately, several apps can simplify the process. Two of the most useful are:

- **PlugShare** – A crowd-sourced app that maps out available chargers and provides real-time user reports. Being community-driven, some locations on the map may not be updated in real-time, meaning that they can be under repair, broken, or in use unless a person reports the same. Despite its weaknesses, it remains a very useful app to know where you can charge on your route and plan accordingly.

- **A Better Route Planner (ABRP)**

– A smart navigation tool that calculates routes based on your EV's battery range and available charging stations. It takes a look at all possible routes and adjusts to incorporate charging stops. Once you have your route, you can save and access it once you're ready to start your trip.

Download Essential Charging Apps

Most charging stations in the Philippines require proprietary apps to initiate charging. Key apps include **Evro, Solarius, and other provider-specific platforms**. Make sure you have these installed and set up before your trip.

Consider Load and Weight Limits

Luggage and passenger weight impact EV efficiency. The heavier your vehicle, the more energy it

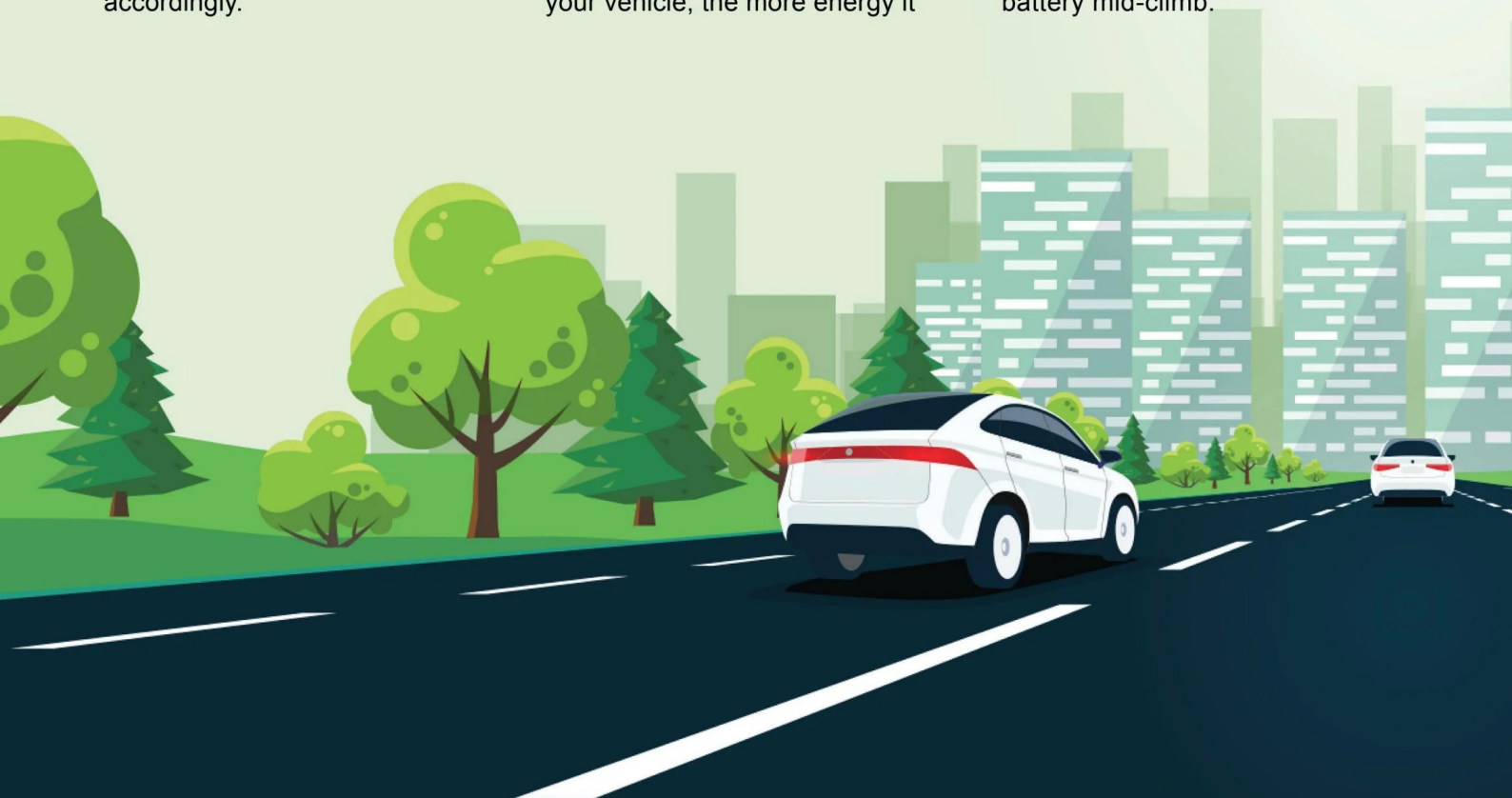
consumes. Be mindful of your EV's maximum load capacity, especially if you plan on bringing home souvenirs from your destination.

Know the Road and Route

Understanding road conditions is just as important as knowing your car's specifications. After all, no one wants to hit a patch of rough road and suffer a bumpy ride.

Inclines and Energy Consumption

Elevation changes significantly affect an EV's energy consumption. **Inclines require more power**, as gravity works against the motor. Steep uphill drives can use **twice the energy** compared to cruising on a flat highway. Before tackling a long uphill stretch, consider charging beforehand to avoid running out of battery mid-climb.



Maximizing Regenerative Braking

One of the key advantages of EVs is **regenerative braking**, which converts kinetic energy back into battery power when slowing down. While this works exceptionally well in city traffic, you can still optimize it on a road trip by adjusting your driving habits. Utilizing regenerative braking on long descents or when slowing for turns can help stretch your range significantly.

Always Have Backup Charging Plans

EV charging infrastructure, while improving, still has limitations. Chargers may be occupied, out of service, or located in inconvenient areas. Having multiple backup plans ensures you're never stranded.

Prepare Alternative Charging Options

- Identify multiple charging stations along your route.
- Have an exit strategy in case of low battery warnings.

- Carry a portable EV charger, ensuring it has proper grounding before departure.
- Keep emergency contact numbers handy in case of unexpected breakdowns.

EV ROAD TRIPS IN THE PHILIPPINES: THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

While the Philippines is still expanding its EV charging network, long-distance travel is becoming more feasible. The key to a successful EV road trip is careful planning and flexibility. With the right mindset and preparation, you can enjoy a smooth, stress-free, and environmentally friendly journey.

EV road trips may require more thought than traditional fuel-powered journeys, but the benefits — lower costs, a quieter ride, and zero emissions — make it worth the effort.

With the proper planning, your electrified adventure awaits. Have fun and happy trails!

Final Tips for a Seamless EV Road Trip

- **Start with a full charge** – It may seem obvious, but beginning your trip with a 100% charged battery maximizes range.
- **Check weather conditions** – Cold or extreme heat can affect battery performance.
- **Drive efficiently** – Avoid sudden acceleration and high speeds, as they deplete the battery faster.
- **Monitor energy use** – Keep an eye on your energy consumption to avoid unnecessary surprises.
- **Leverage rest stops** – Use charging breaks wisely by planning meals or stretching while your car charges.

By following these guidelines, you'll be well-equipped to take on an electrified road trip with confidence and ease!





TRAVEL VLOGGING 101

How to record your perfect road trip like a pro

Words by **Phia Manuell Layoso**



Every road trip is filled with unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime—stunning landscapes, unexpected detours, and the pure thrill of the open road. These experiences can be transformed into a cinematic adventure worth sharing with the proper tools and techniques. Whether you are using a smartphone or a professional camera, capturing outstanding visuals and interesting stories is within reach with the proper technique.

Get Geared Up for the Trip

First, get yourself ready for your trip and ensure that you pack all the essentials to effectively document your adventure with the right equipment:

Camera:

DSLR, mirrorless camera, or even a smartphone with a good lens camera to achieve top quality shots. A pro camera equipped with interchangeable lenses and manual controls provides more control over how your footage will look. However, today's smartphones also feature high-resolution cameras, advanced stabilization, and even cinematic modes that can create stunning shots.

Stabilizer/Gimbal:

Shaky footage can ruin an otherwise great vlog, so a stabilizer or handheld gimbal is a must. These tools assist in producing buttery-smooth shots, particularly when shooting on the move or walking. When using a smartphone, most gimbals currently have in-built tracking and motion capabilities to ensure your subject is in the middle and focused. For static shots, a fluid head tripod is excellent for obtaining stable, professional-looking frames in a vlog. Viewers may tolerate lower-quality visuals, but poor sound can make them lose interest quickly. Microphones built into cameras and phones tend to catch background noise, so an external mic—such as a clip-on lapel mic or a shotgun mic for directional sound—will significantly enhance your sound quality. If you're recording ambient sound, an external audio recorder is another good choice.

Drone:

To really take your travel vlogs to the next level, a drone is a great addition. Aerial shots give amazing perspectives of landscapes, city skylines, and natural scenery, giving your content a cinematic touch. Many smaller drones now feature high-quality 4K footage, smart flight modes, and stabilization, so getting stunning aerial shots is easier than ever. Just make sure to check what's allowed in your area first before taking your drone out.



Power Banks & Spare Batteries:

Battery drain in the middle of your journey can be frustrating, particularly when you are capturing a crucial moment. Always have spare camera batteries, a power bank, and a car charger to ensure your devices are charged. Some power banks with high capacity can even charge laptops, which is convenient if you edit while on the move.

External Storage and Memory Cards:

Shooting in high definition, like 4K or even 1080p at high frame rates, takes up lots of storage. Be sure to pack additional high-speed memory cards so you do not run out of space when shooting. Having an external hard drive or SSD means that you can save your footage each day, limiting the chance of losing valuable clips. Cloud storage is also convenient, but don't forget that a reliable internet connection is necessary for big uploads.

Mastering the Art of Cinematic Filming

To make your travel vlogs look more immersive and unique, you must go beyond just setting up your camera and pressing record. Here is how you can give your road trip vlogs a professional touch:



Plan Your Shots:

While unplanned moments bring sincerity to a vlog, preplanning your shots guarantees you capture the most stunning scenes. Consider beforehand major moments you'd like to shoot, like sunrises over hills of scenery, city streets full of people, or cultural exchanges with locals. Having a general shot list will keep you in check while still leaving time for spontaneous magic happenings.

Use of the Rule of Thirds:

One of the easiest yet most powerful composition methods is the rule of thirds. Visualize breaking your frame into nine equal segments with two horizontal and two vertical lines. Positioning important subjects along these lines or at their intersections results in a more balanced and naturally appealing shot. When recording a speaker, for instance, placing them off-center provides space to feature the background environment, providing context to the narrative.

Capture Multiple Angles:

Keeping your visuals engaging keeps your vlog from being dull. Rather than relying on a single angle, blend various types of shots to introduce variety. Employ wide shots to set the environment, medium shots to highlight interactions, and close-ups to emphasize feelings and minor details.

Add Motion:

Movement gives energy and depth to your videos, making them cinematic. Ditch static shots and try panning (shifting the camera horizontally), tilting (shifting it up and down), and tracking (trailing a subject as they move). If your phone or camera has a slow-motion setting, use it to make dramatic or emotional scenes more impactful, like waves hitting a beach or a bird flying in the air.

Maximize Natural Light:

Lighting is essential to video quality, and daylight is your best ally when shooting outside. The golden hour — just after dawn or just before dusk — offers soft, warm light that flatters subjects and produces a stunning atmosphere. Don't shoot during the harsh sunlight of midday, as it can create deep shadows and overexposed highlights.

Record Nature Sounds:

Sound design is key to distinguishing a mediocre vlog from an engaging one. Recording ambient background sounds — like crashing waves, rustling leaves, streets filled with traffic, or birds chirping — gives your travel narrative authenticity.

Making the Most of Your Existing Gear

You don't need the most current devices to make engaging content. Here's how to optimize what you have:

Make the Most of Your Smartphone:

If you do not own a professional camera, your phone is capable of shooting great video with the right techniques. To get better shots on your phone, shoot in landscape orientation for that cinematic feel and use the highest resolution (e.g., 4K) for crisp, detailed video. Use grid lines to frame your shot correctly, and use the rule of thirds for a more balanced composition.

Turn on Manual Mode:

If your smartphone or camera has a pro (or manual) mode, use it. Adjusting settings such as ISO, shutter speed, and white balance gives you more control over your video, enabling you to adapt to changing lighting and create a more cinematic feel. For example, dropping the ISO diminishes grainy video in dimly lit scenes, and having the correct shutter speed provides silky-smooth motion in action scenes. Mastery of these settings will raise the level of your video, even on a dated computer.

Video Enhancement Apps Download:

If you are vlogging with a smartphone, a video improvement app can release professional-grade capabilities. Apps such as Filmic Pro let you control focus, exposure, frame rates, and even add cinematic color grading. These apps can assist you in maximizing the capabilities of your phone's camera, making your video look as refined as that captured on high-grade cameras.



DIY Stabilization:

If you do not have a gimbal or tripod, you can still have smooth, stable videos using basic DIY methods. Experiment with resting your camera or phone on a firm surface (such as a rock, table, or car hood) to prevent shakiness. You can also use your body as a stabilizer—keep your arms near your body, slightly bend your knees, and walk slowly to reduce motion. In addition, employing optical or electronic image stabilization (should your device support it) may also assist in eliminating slight shakes.

Improve Audio Quality:

Good and clear sound is vital for a compelling vlog. If your camera's built-in microphone picks up too much ambient noise or sounds dull, record the audio separately with a second device, such as another phone or an external audio recorder. You can then sync the audio in post-production with editing software such as Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, or even free software such as DaVinci Resolve.

Edit Like a Pro

Post-production is where your story comes to life. Keep these crucial editing tips in mind:

Select the Right Editing Software:

Choose an editing tool that aligns with your skill level and workflow. Adobe Premiere Pro and Final Cut Pro provide expert features for professionals, while user-friendly mobile applications like CapCut and InShot ensure quick editing and accessibility for beginners.

Trim the Excess:

Save only the best clips to maintain an engaging flow. Cut out shaky footage, unnecessary pauses, or repetitive shots to ensure every frame adds value to your story. A well-paced vlog keeps viewers interested from start to finish.

Use Seamless Transitions:

Rather than filling your video with over-the-top effects, use clean cuts, fades, and seamless motion transitions to keep it feeling cinematic. Easy crossfades, match cuts, or speed ramps can make the flow more effective without drawing attention away from the narrative.

Add Music and Sound Effects:

Background music also establishes the tone of your vlog, with ambient noises such as waves, footsteps, or city sounds that immerse viewers further. Use tracks that will enhance the ambiance of your travels—exciting beats for an adventure or peaceful melodies for panoramic views.

Include Narration or Text Overlays:

Voiceovers can provide context, emotion, and personality to your vlog. For a minimalist option, utilize text overlays to identify significant events, place names, or travel advice. This makes your content more informative and interesting.

Color Grade for Impact:

Brightness, contrast, and saturation adjustments heighten the mood of your footage. Warm colors provide a comfortable, nostalgic atmosphere, while cool colors bring drama. Even slight adjustments can give your vlog a professional and visually appealing look.

Crafting an Engaging Story

An interesting travel vlog is not all about great visuals but about telling a story. Here's how to craft an engaging Story:

Start with an Engaging Hook:

Capture the viewer's attention in the first few seconds with an interesting opening shot — a stunning landscape, a humorous moment, or a question to think about. A good hook invites viewers to stay and view the entire vlog.

Use a Story Arc:

Structure your vlog into a clear beginning, middle, and end. Begin with the purpose or destination of the trip, depict salient experiences and hindrances in the middle, and conclude with learnings or insights that seal the adventure. A well-structured story keeps the audience engaged emotionally.

Get Viewers Involved:

Encourage engagement by asking viewers to comment with their own travel stories or ask questions about their dream destinations. Interacting with your audience creates a community around your content and makes them feel part of your journey.



Final Thoughts

Capturing a road trip like a pro is all about combining creativity with technical know-how. By making the most out of your equipment, using planned shooting strategies, and building your narrative in post-production, you can transform your travel adventures into interesting, visually stunning vlogs. Whether you have a pro camera or just your phone, you can produce fantastic travel videos. So, pack your camera, take the roads, and begin building your next adventure frame by frame!

BEAT THE HEAT WITH AI

Plan the ultimate summer getaway with ChatGPT, Gemini, and Roam Around

Words by **Aljhelyn Piador**

We believe AI isn't here to take our jobs—it's here to make life easier and way more fun! But are you really using AI to its full potential? Sure, it can boost productivity, but what about using it for pure convenience... or even a little adventure?

If you're THAT friend or family member who always plans the itineraries, keeps track of passports, and books tickets, or simply someone whose mantra is: "Live. Laugh. Love. Travel." — here's a cool hack: let AI be your personal travel agent! From crafting the perfect itinerary to finding hidden gems, AI can do the heavy lifting while you sit back and get excited about your trip. Why stress when you can let tech do the work? Give it a shot and let AI take your next vacation to the next level!

To find out which AI is the best travel planner, I tested three AI tools: ChatGPT, Gemini, and Roam Around. Below is a comparison of their capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses.



The Testing Prompt

If you want to try this yourself, here's a prompt you can use:

"I'm planning a [trip length] trip to [destination] on [specific dates]. I prefer [travel style: budget, luxury, adventure, cultural, foodie, solo, family, etc.] and want to explore [specific interests: historical sites, hidden gems, nightlife, nature, etc.]. My budget is [specific budget or flexible]. I need recommendations for:

- A daily itinerary that balances sightseeing, food, and relaxation.
- The best food spots (local, highly rated, and unique experiences).
- The most efficient transportation options for getting around.
- Safety tips & essential travel hacks specific to this location.
- Any AI-powered tools or apps that could improve my experience.

Note: In "Roam Around," you need to fill out the text boxes with your preferences before generating an itinerary.

ChatGPT as a Travel Planner

ChatGPT is like that super-organized friend who makes spreadsheets for everything. It dishes out well-structured itineraries with a realistic budget breakdown (still depending on your spending habits), making sure you don't end up broke halfway through your trip. It even throws in handy transportation tips, whether you're hopping on a train, catching a cab, or just strolling through scenic streets. Plus, it sprinkles in safety tips and travel hacks to keep you from making rookie mistakes.

But here's the catch — ChatGPT can be a bit too ambitious. Some of its itineraries feel like a marathon, leaving little room to breathe. It also lacks real-time updates, so if a museum suddenly decides to close for the day, you're out of luck. And if you're someone who loves nightlife and spontaneous socializing, you might find ChatGPT's recommendations a bit too tame.



✦ Alright, a 3-day Baguio adventure on a 5,000 peso budget, hitting historical sites, hidden gems, nightlife, and nature! That's a fun challenge. Let's break it down:

Budget Breakdown (Estimated):

- **Transportation (Bus & Jeepneys):** 1,000 - 1,500 pesos (round trip bus, local jeepney fares)
- **Accommodation:** 1,000 - 1,500 pesos (budget hostels, transient houses)
- **Food:** 1,500 pesos (local eateries, market food)
- **Activities/Entrance Fees:** 500 - 1,000 pesos (depending on choices)

Transportation:

- Book your bus tickets in advance, especially for a weekend trip. Consider Victory Liner, Genesis, or JoyBus for comfortable and relatively affordable options.
- Once in Baguio, jeepneys are your best friend! They're cheap and cover most of the city. Download a Baguio jeepney route app or ask locals for directions.

Accommodation:

- **Transient Houses/Hostels:** These are your best bet for budget-friendly stays. Search for places near Burnham Park or the city center for easy access. Check online platforms like Agoda, Booking.com, or Airbnb, filtering for the lowest prices.
- Consider places a little further away from the city center, as they tend to be cheaper.

Food:

- **Baguio Public Market:** A must-visit! You can find affordable and delicious local food here, like "tapilog" (tapa, fried rice, and egg) or "pinakpikan."
- **Local eateries (carinderias):** These are scattered throughout the city and offer budget-friendly meals.
- **Street food:** Try the famous strawberry taho, grilled corn, or other local snacks.

Itinerary:

Day 1: Friday - Historical Baguio & Burnham Vibes

- **Morning (Historical):**
 - Arrive in Baguio and check into your accommodation.
 - Visit Session Road: Walk along this iconic street, taking in the city's atmosphere.
 - Explore Baguio Cathedral: A beautiful landmark with a rich history.
 - Visit City Hall: Observe the architecture and surrounding park.
- **Afternoon (Burnham & Market):**

🗨 Enter a prompt for Gemini

Gemini as a Travel Planner

Gemini is your laid-back, budget-conscious travel buddy who knows where to find the best street food. It's fantastic for solo adventurers, focusing on free activities, local eateries, and scenic experiences like beach sunsets and hidden hiking spots. If you're a foodie, you'll love how Gemini hypes up local delicacies — ever heard of Chori Burgers or Jonah's Fruit Shakes? Now you have! It even tosses in practical travel hacks like how to bargain at markets and avoid common scams.

But don't lace up your walking shoes just yet — Gemini assumes you have unlimited energy. It often suggests a lot of walking without factoring in transport alternatives, which could be exhausting. It also skips over some must-do activities. For example, if you're heading to Boracay, you might miss out on snorkeling, cliff diving, or island hopping, which are basically the heart of the experience.

Roam Around as a Travel Planner

Roam Around is the social butterfly of travel AIs, perfect for those who love meeting new people. It's all about bars, night markets, and hotspots where you can mingle with locals and fellow travelers. A big plus? It lets you click through to maps, websites, and descriptions of places, making it super user-friendly. It even recommends AI tools like Klook and Google Maps to help smooth out your plans.

But before you pack your bags, know this — Roam Around isn't the best at keeping your wallet happy when traveling for days and nights. It often overshoots the budget and relies a lot on costly transportation like motorbike rentals and long

Itinerary

Baguio is a fantastic destination, especially if you're looking for a budget-friendly adventure packed with activities. With a budget of 5,000 pesos, we can definitely make the most of your three days. Let's dive into your itinerary!

Day 1: Exploring the City and Nature

Morning:

- **Breakfast at Café by the Ruins** (Approx. 200 pesos): Start your day with a hearty breakfast. Try their famous Ruins' breakfast or a local favorite, the strawberry taho!
- **Burnham Park:** After breakfast, take a stroll around Burnham Park. You can rent a boat for about 100 pesos and paddle around the lake. Enjoy the fresh air and beautiful scenery!

Afternoon:

- **Lunch at Good Taste** (Approx. 150 pesos): This place is known for its affordable and delicious meals. You can get a big serving of rice and a viand for a very reasonable price.
- **Visit the Baguio Cathedral:** A short walk from Good Taste, this beautiful cathedral is a must-see. Take some time to appreciate the architecture and the view from the hill.
- **Session Road:** Explore the shops and local boutiques. You can grab some souvenirs or just enjoy the vibrant atmosphere.

Evening:

- **Dinner at the Night Market** (Approx. 200 pesos): Head to the Night Market along Harrison Road. You can find a variety of street food, clothes, and other goodies. Try the street food like fish balls, kwek-kwek, and more!
- **Accommodation:** Look for budget-friendly hostels or inns (Approx. 800 pesos/night). You can find decent places for around 800-1,000 pesos.

Day 2: Adventure and Culture

Morning:

- **Breakfast at your accommodation or a local eatery** (Approx. 100 pesos): Fuel up for the day!
- **Camp John Hay:** Head over to Camp John Hay for some outdoor fun. You can rent a bike for about 150 pesos and explore the area. Don't miss the Eco-Trail for a bit of hiking!

Afternoon:

- **Lunch at the Camp John Hay Picnic Area** (Approx. 150 pesos): Pack a simple lunch or buy from local vendors.
- **Visit the Philippine Military Academy:** Check out the academy and its museum. It's free to enter, and you can learn a lot about the country's military history.

Evening:

- **Dinner at Café Yagam** (Approx. 250 pesos): Enjoy some local Cordilleran dishes. Their rice meals are filling and delicious!
- **Explore the local bars or cafes:** If you're up for it, check out some local spots for a nightcap or just to relax.

Day 3: Nature and Relaxation

Morning:

boat rides. Plus, its itineraries lean heavily on mainstream tourist spots rather than immersive cultural experiences. And if you're doing island hopping, be ready for a whirlwind — its plans can feel rushed, cramming too many destinations into a short time.

Roam Around as a Travel Planner

So, which AI is the best?

Overall, after running a little AI travel itinerary showdown, it's clear that each AI has its own “personality” when it comes to planning trips — even with the same location and budget. While all three offer solid insights, their priorities and styles vary significantly.

ChatGPT is like that meticulous friend who color-codes their planner and always knows the best route to avoid traffic. It crafts a well-balanced itinerary that blends adventure, culture, and food while keeping things structured and budget-friendly. Each day flows smoothly, with detailed transport options, estimated costs, and even safety tips, making it perfect for travelers who want a hassle-free, no-guesswork plan. Bonus points for integrating AI-powered tools like Google Maps and Grab, giving it a modern, tech-savvy edge.

Gemini, on the other hand, is the budget-conscious backpacker who thrives on local finds and street food. It prioritizes affordability, encouraging travelers to hop on public transport, eat at market stalls, and explore the city like a local. While this makes it a dream for solo budget travelers, it sometimes skips major attractions in favor of everyday cultural experiences — so if you want that postcard-perfect tourist shot, you might need to tweak the plan.

Then there's Roam Around, the adventure-seeker of the bunch. If your idea of a perfect trip includes zip-lining, nature reserves, and scenic treks, this AI has your back. Its itinerary leans toward a more relaxed, experience-driven journey rather than a strict schedule — great for those who like to go with the flow. However,

this thrill-seeking lifestyle can mean a slightly higher budget, especially with some splurge-worthy dining choices thrown in.

Using AI for trip planning has some serious perks. It takes the legwork out of research, helping you craft a structured, well-informed itinerary in minutes instead of hours. It suggests must-visit spots, dining recommendations based on your budget, and even estimated costs, so you don't accidentally blow your travel fund on day one. Navigation is also a breeze with AI-powered apps like Google Maps, Sakay.ph, and Grab, making sure you reach your destinations with minimal drama. First-time travelers, take note: AI makes it easier to explore confidently without feeling overwhelmed.

But let's not put AI on a pedestal just yet. It's great, but it's not perfect. AI itineraries rely on data that may not always be up to date, so you might run into outdated recommendations or miss out on real-time factors like sudden weather shifts, peak tourist hours, or unexpected business closures. And let's be real — AI doesn't have that personal touch. It might point you toward trending spots, but it won't always capture the magic of hidden gems, local quirks, or spontaneous moments that make travel truly special.

That's why AI should be your travel assistant, not your travel overlord. Use it to gather insights, structure your trip, and streamline logistics — but always leave room for flexibility. Maybe AI didn't mention that charming street vendor selling the best local delicacy, or perhaps there's a pop-up festival happening that day. Embracing the unexpected is half the fun! Over time, AI-assisted planning may even sharpen your travel instincts — so go ahead, let AI do the heavy lifting, but keep your sense of adventure intact.



Words by **Alyssa Joji Silva**

MODERN TRAVEL PLATFORMS

Summer is a season for good vibes, warm sunshine, and carefree days—but too often, it can be overshadowed by the frustration of standing in long lines, high expenses, or endless waits just to relax. Shouldn't summer be about ease and enjoyment? In an age where convenience is just a tap away, it's worth considering how travel apps can transform our summer experiences.

Click, Plan, and Go!

From browsing travel brochures to making countless phone calls,

summer planning was a labor-intensive process. Fortunately, those days are behind us. Today, with the advent of travel apps and websites such as [Agoda](#), [Klook](#), [Traveloka](#), [Holiday Factory](#), [Booky](#), and many others, everything is just a few clicks away. These platforms provide unmatched convenience, enabling you to book in advance, explore a wide range of staycations, and even organize a complete itinerary for your day. We can easily wander through sandy beaches and museums, or even arrange transportation to reach our intended destinations.

Another great aspect of these apps is that they offer substantial deals that can help keep our wallets intact. While some of the biggest deals are available only on specific dates, travel apps and websites consistently provide plenty of ways to save money—such as promo codes, early-bird discounts, and notifications about ongoing deals. For those who frequently use these platforms, many also offer loyalty programs where you can earn points or cashback for future trips, making them even more budget-friendly. Honestly, I don't have any loyalty points at the moment,

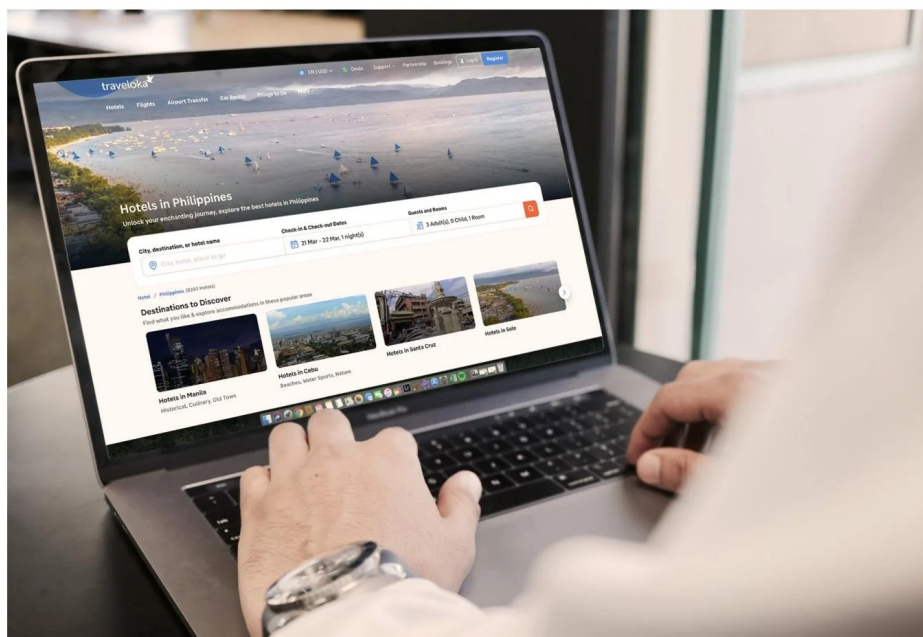


but maybe that's just a sign that I need to travel more—which I absolutely love, notwithstanding the unplanned expenses (cue *sad violin music*).

If you're curious about the booking process, it's quite simple. Just enter the duration of your stay, the city or country you wish to visit, and the number of people you're traveling with. Once that's completed, you'll receive various options for places to stay or explore, making trip planning a breeze. The payment process is similar to any other online transaction. You can either pay by linking your bank account or use popular payment platforms like *PayPal*, *GCash*, or *Maya*, depending on the app's available options.

Plan Less, Travel More

With travel apps and websites easily accessible, the convenience



and affordability they provide allow every traveler the opportunity to enjoy the summer getaway they've been longing for. Especially when you're stressed from work or buried under a pile of paperwork, using travel apps and websites makes planning your trip much simpler and less time-consuming than traditional methods.

Seeing estimated prices with discounts on travel apps and websites is a significant benefit. It enables effective budgeting and advanced planning, helping you determine the best time to visit. Additionally, travel apps and websites provide the opportunity to explore potential destinations worldwide. It's like getting a sneak peek of strolling under the cherry blossoms in Japan, wearing a traditional hanbok while wandering historical sites in South Korea, or enjoying unique cuisines in Vietnam, making your planning much more exciting and tangible.

But how can we know the best time to visit our target destinations? The great thing about these travel platforms is that they send notifications directly to your email or smartphone, highlighting

destinations that could spark your sense of adventure. In addition, they often include significant discounts in the notifications, making it even more exciting to plan your next travel adventure. Furthermore, some travel apps and websites offer online articles filled with travel tips and insights. Think of them as your personal digital travel buddy, providing the best spots to visit, hidden gems to discover, and deals you won't want to miss. Just ensure your notifications are enabled so you can make your travel planning even more informed and unforgettable.

These travel platforms serve as a wonderful source of motivation, showcasing exciting destinations that inspire you to take that well-deserved break. Let's be honest—who wouldn't feel their eyes light up at the stunning pictures and videos of breathtaking locations, both domestic and international, especially when paired with major discounts on these platforms? It's the ideal combination to ignite your wanderlust and get you thrilled about your next adventure, while also providing the satisfaction of finally checking off those countries and cities that have been lingering on your travel list for too long.



ASUS ROG Flow Z13

Tablet

PHP 174,995

GAMERS AND TECH ENTHUSIASTS looking for power and portability can now get their hands on the latest ASUS Republic of Gamers (ROG) innovation—the 2025 ROG Flow Z13 GZ302. This cutting-edge gaming tablet combines a high-performance processor, a stunning display, and an advanced cooling system to deliver an unrivaled portable gaming experience.

At the core of the ROG Flow Z13 is the AMD Ryzen AI Max+ 395 processor paired with Radeon 8060S Graphics, featuring 16 Zen 5 CPU cores and 40 RDNA 3.5 GPU compute units. This powerful configuration enables seamless multitasking, high-performance gaming, and efficient power management. With 50 TOPS of NPU performance, the Flow Z13 also serves as a Copilot+ PC, providing AI-powered features for improved productivity and gaming.

For gamers demanding top-tier memory performance, the Flow Z13 introduces a unified quad-channel memory structure. Unlike traditional gaming laptops, which allocate separate pools of memory for CPU and GPU tasks, the Flow Z13 dynamically distributes 32GB of LPDDR5X 8000MHz RAM as needed. This setup maximizes bandwidth and minimizes latency, ensuring optimal performance whether gaming, streaming, or handling AI-intensive workloads.

Cooling is a crucial element of any gaming device, and the Flow Z13 redefines standards with its redesigned vapor chamber system. Constructed from stainless steel and copper, the enhanced cooling system covers 54% more of the mainboard than its predecessor. Dual Arc Flow Fans™ and ultra-thin heatsink fins effectively manage airflow, ensuring the device remains cool even during marathon gaming sessions. The innovative standing-tablet design further boosts thermal efficiency by allowing unrestricted airflow to internal components.

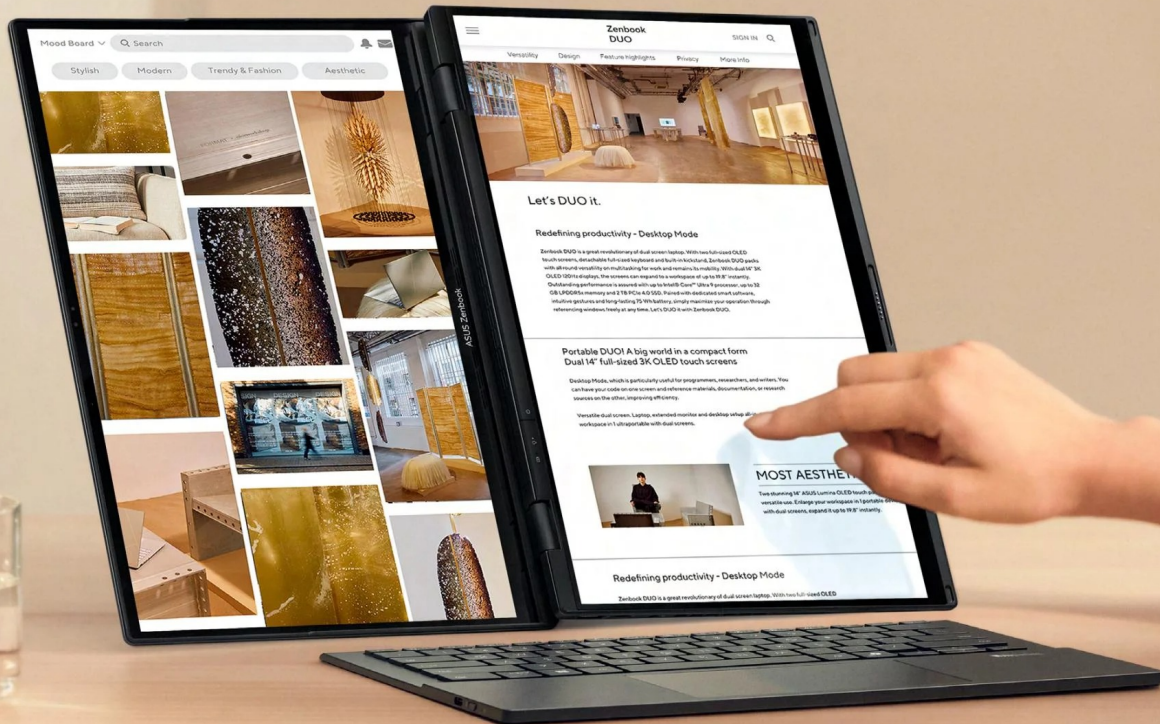
The Flow Z13 also boasts an immersive ROG Nebula Display. This 13-inch 2.5K touchscreen features a 180Hz refresh rate, 500 nits of peak brightness, and 100% DCI-P3 color accuracy, ensuring crisp visuals and smooth gameplay. Corning Gorilla Glass 5 protects the screen, making it resistant to scratches and everyday wear.

Despite its compact form, the Flow Z13 is packed with connectivity options. Dual USB-C ports with USB4 support, a dedicated HDMI 2.1 port, a USB Type-A port, and a microSD card reader provide ample versatility for peripherals. Additionally, the expanded 70Wh battery delivers extended gaming sessions, while a newly designed Command Center button allows instant access to system functions.

The ASUS ROG Flow Z13 (2025) GZ302 is now available in the Philippines at ROG Concept Stores nationwide. The package includes a complimentary 3-month PC Game Pass, an Office 2024 Home lifetime license, and a free 1-year subscription to Microsoft 365 Basic. ASUS also offers a 2-year International Warranty and 1-year Accidental Damage Protection.







ASUS Zenbook AI Series

Laptops

ASUS Zenbook Duo (UX8406CA)

PHP139,995 – Intel Core Ultra 9 (Series 2), 32GB RAM, 1TB SSD

THE REVOLUTIONARY dual-screen [Zenbook DUO](#) (UX8406CA) is now available with the latest Intel Core Ultra 9 processor (Series 2), setting a new standard for creativity and productivity. With its dual 14-inch 16:10 3K 120Hz OLED HDR NanoEdge touchscreens, detachable full-size keyboard, and built-in kickstand, Zenbook DUO expertly combines AI benefits with versatile multiple modes — Dual Screen, Desktop, Laptop, and Screen Sharing — and superb mobility.

Measuring only 14.6mm thin and weighing just 1.35kg, it also features a large capacity 75Wh battery and includes a comprehensive array of I/O ports. Paired with dedicated smart software and intuitive gesture control, the easy-to-use Zenbook DUO maximizes productivity with zero fuss.

With the latest version of the renowned laptop, casual creators and hardworking students alike can enjoy the best AI computing.





ASUS Zenbook 14 (UX3405CA)

PHP89,995 – Intel Core Ultra 9 (Series 2), 16GB RAM, 1TB SSD

PHP77,995 – Intel Core Ultra 7 (Series 2), 16GB RAM, 512GB SSD

THE SLEEK [ZENBOOK 14 \(UX3405CA\)](#) is the ultimate Intel Evo Edition ultraportable laptop, which takes sophistication to a new level. Zenbook 14 features a sleek, lightweight, and sturdy all-metal design plus an enhanced lifespan 75 Wh battery. At only 14.9mm thin and 1.2kg light, Zenbook 14's elegant chassis delivers uncompromising mobility.

Effortlessly tackle tasks with the AI prowess of Zenbook 14, now available with up to an Intel Core Ultra 9 processor (Series 2) and Intel Arc Graphics. Its ultrafast up to 1TB SSD storage, 16GB RAM, and Wi-Fi 7 promises less waiting time and faster, seamless workflow at any place.

An immersive audiovisual experience is provided by the vivid 3K ASUS Lumina OLED 120 Hz touchscreen and powerful new super-linear speakers, and the user-friendly design incorporates convenient face login, an FHD IR camera with a physical shutter for privacy, and a new quiet ASUS ErgoSense keyboard. Zenbook 14 also comes with all the essential I/O ports — including Thunderbolt 4 Type-C, for seamless connectivity.

ASUS Zenbook 14 (UM3406KA); COPILOT+ PC

WITH THE LATEST FLAGSHIP — AMD Ryzen AI 7 350 processor with a 50 TOPS NPU and AMD Radeon 860M graphics — [Zenbook 14 \(UM3406KA\)](#) brings you a next-level Copilot+ PC experience with enhanced security, speed, and personalization. With integrated AI engines to accelerate AI computing, Microsoft Copilot for personal assistance, and a suite of powerful ASUS AI applications, the Zenbook 14 with AMD Ryzen AI is one of the best productivity companions in the market.

Experience unmatched portability at 14.9mm thin and 1.2kg light, in a durable all-metal construction with a unique Jade Black colorway. Its day-long stamina also allows work from anywhere. Its ultra-vivid ASUS Lumina OLED display and powerful new super-linear speakers provide an immersive entertainment experience, too. The Zenbook 14 also includes all the essential I/O ports you need – including USB 4 Type-C, for fast and seamless on-the-go connections.



The new 2025 ASUS Zenbook series is available at ASUS Concept Stores. Each purchase also includes a complimentary Office 2024 Home free lifetime license, plus a free 1-year subscription to Microsoft 365 Basic. The latest Zenbook AI Laptops are also entitled to ASUS' sought-after after-sales service, which includes a 2-year International Warranty and ASUS Perfect Warranty with 1-year accidental damage protection.

Anker Prime Charger

Charger

PHP10,495 – 250W, 6 Ports, GaNPrime

PHP4,995 – 200W, 6 Ports, GaN



AS WE RELY on multiple devices to navigate our day, traditional chargers with slow speeds and limited ports no longer meet the needs of modern workspaces. Enter the Anker Prime series—powerful, smart, and stylish chargers designed to enhance your desk setup while delivering fast and efficient power to all your devices.

The Anker Prime lineup features two high-performance models: the 250W and 200W multi-port chargers. Both utilize GaNPrime technology, ensuring ultra-efficient power delivery, rapid charging speeds, and enhanced safety features. Tailored for professionals, creatives, and tech enthusiasts, these chargers eliminate the need for multiple adapters, reducing cable clutter while keeping all essential devices charged and ready to use.

The Anker Prime Charger (250W, 6 Ports, GaNPrime) is the ultimate power hub for anyone who needs to charge multiple high-powered devices simultaneously. With a total output of 250W and a maximum USB-C output of 140W, it can charge a MacBook Pro 16" M3 from 0% to 50% in just 25 minutes. Smart AI power allocation ensures optimal charging efficiency by automatically distributing power to keep essential devices running at peak performance. Users can fine-tune power levels using an innovative smart adjustment knob and even manage charging remotely through the Anker app. A sleek digital clock display adds a modern touch, enabling customization for a more personalized workspace setup.



For those seeking a more compact solution, the **Anker Prime Charger (200W, 6 Ports, GaN)** delivers remarkable power without the bulk. It's perfect for users managing multiple devices—laptops, tablets, and accessories—providing fast, uninterrupted power while minimizing heat output. Thanks to its sleek design and GaNPrime technology, it guarantees top-tier performance in a lightweight, space-saving package.

The Anker Prime series is the ultimate charging solution for those who demand power, performance, and a streamlined workspace.

Canon PIXMA PRO Series

Printer

PHP29,995 – PIXMA PRO-200S

PHP44,995 – imagePROGRAF PRO-310

PHP 104,995 – imagePROGRAF PRO-510

CANON has launched three new PIXMA PRO series professional photo printers to meet the diverse needs of creative professionals and photography enthusiasts.

The new PRO series printers deliver outstanding image quality through advanced ink systems tailored to different user needs. The PIXMA PRO-200S features an 8-color dye-based ink system, while the imagePROGRAF PRO-310 and imagePROGRAF PRO-510 utilize Canon's newly developed LUCIA PRO II pigment ink system with 10 and 12 colors, respectively. The imagePROGRAF PRO-510's expanded ink system includes red, blue, and two shades of grey, enabling richer color expression and superior tonal gradation.



The LUCIA PRO II pigment ink also provides superior light and scratch resistance to improve print longevity. Prints can maintain quality for up to 200 years, ideal for long-term display and preservation. This enhanced durability benefits prints on glossy and luster surfaces, ensuring easier handling during framing, packaging, and transportation. In addition, the Chroma Optimizer in the imagePROGRAF PRO-310 and imagePROGRAF PRO-510 ensures

exceptional gloss uniformity under different viewing angles and lighting conditions.

Each model in the series features a 3-inch LCD and wireless connectivity options for intuitive operation.

In line with Canon Philippines' commitment to sustainability, PIXMA

PRO-200S, imagePROGRAF PRO-310, and imagePROGRAF PRO-510 models come in eco-conscious packaging, replacing traditional polystyrene foam with recyclable cardboard and pulp molds.

The PIXMA PRO series is available for pre-order at all authorized Canon Philippines dealers.



Epson SureColor S9130

Printer

EPSON continues to push the boundaries of professional printing with the introduction of the SureColor S9130, a state-of-the-art signage printer designed for businesses that demand precision, versatility, and efficiency. With an expanded color gamut, cutting-edge printhead technology, and seamless usability, this latest innovation is set to redefine the standards of high-quality signage production.



One of the standout features of the SureColor S9130 is its 11-color ink set, now including a new Green ink, enabling an expanded color range for more vivid and accurate prints. This enhancement makes it the ideal choice for luxury brand displays, vehicle wraps, fine art prints, and other high-end applications. Businesses can optimize their workflow with dual-size ink packs available in 800ml and 1500ml capacities, providing flexibility for varying production needs.

The printer is equipped with an advanced printhead featuring 9,600 nozzles, ensuring faster output and a 5% increase in speed compared to its predecessor. Epson's Nozzle Verification Technology (NVT) detects and corrects clogged nozzles automatically, maintaining consistent print quality. A built-in temperature sensor

further enhances performance by stabilizing color accuracy across every print, while the newly introduced 'Text Sharpness' mode in Epson Edge Print Pro ensures crisp and detailed fine-text printing.

Designed with efficiency in mind, the SureColor S9130 features an improved warm-up time, allowing users to start printing in just 2.9 minutes. Its 4.3-inch tiltable touchscreen provides an intuitive, glove-friendly interface for easy navigation, while the media lifter simplifies material handling, reducing strain for operators. Its compact 64-inch, low-profile design makes it a perfect fit for limited workspaces while allowing users to monitor multiple units effortlessly.

Environmental responsibility is at the core of Epson's innovation. The SureColor S9130 utilizes UltraChrome GS3 eco-solvent ink, which has achieved Greenguard Gold Certification. This eco-friendly ink formula is free from nickel and fluorine compounds, ensuring low chemical emissions while maintaining superior print quality.

Further enhancing operational efficiency, the printer integrates with Epson Cloud Solution PORT, a cloud-based monitoring system that provides real-time insights into printer performance, utilization, and service status. Accessible via PC, smartphones, or tablets, this feature allows businesses to make informed decisions, optimize workflows, and maximize productivity.

The SureColor S9130 is more than just a printer—it is a complete solution for businesses seeking to elevate their signage production with precision, efficiency, and sustainability. With its groundbreaking technology and enhanced usability, it empowers professionals to achieve unparalleled print quality while streamlining operations.



HUAWEI Band 10

Smartband

PHP2,199 – Durable Polymer Case

PHP2,399 – Aluminum Alloy Case



HUAWEI continues to redefine smart wearables with the launch of the ultra-thin and lightweight Huawei Band 10. Designed for users who prioritize fitness, sleep tracking, and everyday convenience, this latest addition to the Huawei Band series combines smartwatch-level features with all-day comfort.

The Huawei Band 10 is engineered to be a seamless companion for active individuals. With a 14-day battery life, users can enjoy uninterrupted functionality, whether paired with iOS or Android devices. Smart connectivity features allow quick replies to calls and messages, music control, and remote photo capture. For added convenience, the device supports QR payments via GCash, enabling hassle-free transactions straight from the wrist.

Fitness enthusiasts will appreciate the smartband's advanced motion tracking across over 100 workout modes, including basketball, swimming, and running. Powered by AI-driven insights, it monitors

key metrics such as heart rate variability, SpO2 levels, and pulse wave arrhythmia for a comprehensive view of performance. Huawei also introduces the industry-first AI Swimming Posture Model, enhancing stroke recognition and underwater heart rate tracking with precision.

Beyond fitness, the Huawei Band 10 offers a holistic approach to wellness with pro-level sleep monitoring. It provides bedtime reminders, detects sleep latency, and analyzes heart rate variability during rest to assess sleep quality. The Sleep Breathing Awareness feature evaluates breathing patterns, helping identify potential sleep apnea risks. Additionally, the Emotional Wellbeing Assistant introduces interactive mood tracking through a playful Pet Panda animation, while guided breathing exercises and women's health management tools further promote overall wellness.

Style meets function in the ultra-thin 8.99mm design, making it the thinnest smartband in its category. Weighing only 15g, it offers an almost weightless feel for comfortable, all-day wear. The aluminum-alloy variant comes in Matte Black, White, Green, Blue, and Purple, while the durable polymer plastic version is available in Black and Pink. A vibrant 1.47-inch AMOLED screen with an Always-On Display feature enhances the user experience, with over 700 customizable watch face options to match any mood or style.

With its perfect blend of performance, style, and wellness-focused features, the Huawei Band 10 is the ideal companion for those seeking to elevate their daily routine.





Lenovo ThinkSmart Core Gen 2

Video Conferencing System

ONE OF THE FIRST AI-OPTIMIZED compute devices purpose-built for video conferencing room systems, the Lenovo ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 elevates every meeting experience—no matter the room size or setup. This intelligent device combines AI-optimized technology and unparalleled performance for intuitive collaboration and enhanced productivity, all in a protected and user-friendly solution.

For a complete room solution right out of the box, ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 Full Room Kit is a single-SKU option that adds the intelligent ThinkSmart Bar 180, enabling Intelligent Speaker functionality. Installation and deployment are quick and convenient, and ample ports allow for quick and easy connection to different devices. No matter what configuration IT teams create, every collaboration is more secure, thanks to the advanced hardware-based protection of the Intel vPro platform and automatic Windows 11 security updates.

The ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 offers an incredible array of smart features to enable smarter meeting rooms.

- **Intelligent Power** – Powered by the Intel Core Ultra processor and Intel vPro platform, the ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 efficiently manages heavy AI workloads with up to 40% lower power consumption. The unique NPU architecture built on Windows 11 IoT accelerates compute tasks and data transfer, optimizing AI performance and making operations more efficient, reliable, and secure.
- **Smart Assistance** – Supporting Microsoft Teams Rooms or Zoom Rooms on Windows, the ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 boosts collaboration with AI-enabled features through Microsoft Copilot or Zoom AI Companion. AI-enabled experiences like intelligent framing of meeting participants, auto voice detection, smart name tags,

meeting summaries, and real-time assistance are just some of the smart features to look forward to in the future.

- **Purpose Built** – The versatile built-in cable management system locks wires in place or detaches completely for a sleeker, more compact setup, and an integrated EDID management facilitates improved connectivity with room displays. ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 is tested to run 24/7/365 in a wide temperature range (5°C to 40°C), withstanding a crowded server room, and boasts a quiet fanless enclosure to go unnoticed behind a conference room display.
- **Inherent Flexibility** – With Windows 11 IoT, ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 offers the flexibility to choose from a variety of peripherals. To make installation easier, the smart device comes with either the Lenovo IP Controller or the ThinkSmart Controller to suit a variety of room setups. For a truly flexible experience, the intelligent device offers users the ability to easily plug in their laptop if needed and run a meeting in BYOD mode, regardless of the UC platform.

The ThinkSmart Core Gen 2 comes preloaded with ThinkSmart Manager software with the Intel vPro platform for remote manageability in real-time to save IT teams' resources. And, for additional security, the Lenovo [ThinkShield](#) offering adds an extra layer of security through its OS-to-cloud solutions.

For ongoing support, the new AI-optimized video conferencing compute devices includes a three-year Lenovo warranty with Premier Support and one-year ThinkSmart Manager Premium license. Also included is Lenovo Smart Collaboration Professional Services Deploy and Maintain to ensure fast, efficient rollout.





nubia V70 Max

Smartphone

PHP4,699

THE LATEST addition to the smartphone market, the nubia V70 Max, is here to elevate your everyday experience. Designed for users who seek power, style, and reliability, this feature-packed smartphone ensures you stay connected, entertained, and ready for any adventure.

With a robust 6000mAh battery enhanced by AI Power Saving technology, the nubia V70 Max delivers exceptional longevity. Whether you're streaming, gaming, or capturing memories, its 22.5W fast-charging system ensures minimal downtime. The device boasts an impressive four-year battery health span, making it a lasting companion for dynamic lifestyles.

Performance is key, and the nubia V70 Max rises to the occasion with a Unisoc T606 Octa-Core 1.6GHz processor, ensuring smooth multitasking and seamless app performance. Running on MyOS 15 based on Android, it provides a user-friendly experience, whether for work or leisure.

For those who love immersive entertainment, the nubia V70 Max features a 6.9-inch HD+ display with Live Island 2.0. Offering a 120Hz refresh rate, a 20.5:9 aspect ratio, and

a 1640x720 resolution, this display transforms every viewing experience into a cinematic delight. Enhanced with DTS Processing technology, the device also delivers high-quality audio, perfect for music lovers and movie enthusiasts.

Photography enthusiasts will appreciate the device's 50MP AI Triple Camera, which captures high-resolution images with stunning clarity. Automatic HDR ensures vibrant colors and well-balanced lighting, whether shooting landscapes, portraits, or night scenes. The AI Magic Photos feature makes editing effortless, allowing users to adjust backgrounds and remove unwanted objects with a simple swipe. With 256GB of storage, there's ample space for all your captured memories.

Available in Lake Green, Galactic Gray, and Coral Pink, the nubia V70 Max is designed to complement your personal style.

The nubia V70 Max is more than just a smartphone—it's a lifestyle companion that keeps up with your pace. Whether you're capturing the perfect shot, enjoying seamless entertainment, or staying productive throughout the day, this device is built to help you #MaxYourLife.

PARADE

gadgets magazine.com.ph



OPPO A5 Pro 5G

Smartphone

PHP15,999 – A5 Pro 5G (8GB+256GB)

PHP10,999 – A5 Pro (8GB+128GB)



DESIGNED FOR GO-GETTERS who need a tough device, the OPPO A5 Pro 5G offers IP69 water and dust protection to handle life's unpredictable moments. From surviving fresh water immersion, hot water or high-pressure sprays, and dust intrusion, this phone is tough enough to keep up with Filipinos' active lifestyles.

The OPPO A5 Pro 5G also sports the innovative Splash Touch technology, which allows users to enjoy uninterrupted use even when the screen is damped by different types of liquid. Whether the screen has water or oil splashes from cooking a feast or when your hands become sweaty while playing your favorite mobile game, the OPPO A5 Pro 5 G has you covered.

A strong and reliable phone is essential for those who often drop their devices. Whether it slips from your hand while you're playing your favorite game or falls off your tripod or desk while filming content, the OPPO A5 Pro 5G's increased impact resistance ensures it can withstand falls from all angles, both interior and exterior.

The Military-Grade Shock Resistance of the OPPO A5 Pro 5G makes it an even more durable device in the A Series lineup. With its upgraded double-tempering glass, robust aluminum alloy upper cover for the motherboard, and thorough cushioning in its interior, this device is ideal for Filipinos who are always out and about.

For aspiring content creators or those who simply want to capture core memories in crisp quality, leave it up to the OPPO A5 Pro 5G to deliver these and more.

Its Ultra-Clear 50MP Main Camera, 2MP Portrait Camera, and 8MP Front Camera capture clear photos even from unique perspectives. Meanwhile, the Livephoto feature elevates capturing memories by recording a video and

audio 1.5 seconds before and after the shutter clicks. OPPO's renowned AI Imaging tech produces well-defined photos with the Portrait Mode, which uses the 50MP and 2MP lenses simultaneously, and the AI Portrait Retouching, which reduces noise on faces.

Other AI features content creators can rely on in the OPPO A5 Pro 5G include the AI Editor — AI Unblur sharpens and restores blurred areas, AI Reflection Remover removes glass reflections and glares, and AI Eraser 2.0 seamlessly removes unwanted objects in your photos.

Further proving its advanced artificial intelligence is the AI Studio where users can get their creative juices flowing by transforming their portraits into art, create AI-generated GIFs, or even animate their furbabies for the perfect phone background.

For Filipinos who love gaming or simply need a reliable device to unwind, the OPPO A5 Pro 5G keeps it going with its robust power sources. Its 5800mAh Large Battery and 45W SUPERVOOCTM flash charging allows you to take your sweet time working your way to victory or watching your favorite movies or TV series. The device also carries the Trinity Engine in ColorOS 15 Lite for a guaranteed smooth user experience.

Longevity-wise, users of the OPPO A5 Pro 5G are guaranteed 4 years of full, seamless use of this smart device with OPPO's cutting-edge battery tech that holds up to over 80% of its battery health even after as many as 1,600 charge cycles.

The OPPO A5 Pro 5G comes in two eye-catching colorways — Bloom Pink and Mocha Brown. On the other hand, the OPPO A5 Pro is available in Mocha Brown and Olive Green colorways.

PARADE

gadgets magazine.com.ph



realme 14 Series 5G

Smartphone



THE REALME 14 SERIES 5G takes state-of-the-art smartphone performance to the next level, bringing a complete package that blends power and clarity.

In addition to the Triple Sony Cameras, this latest release features flagship-level processors, massive 6000mAh batteries, and outstanding SUPERVOOC Charging, delivering an all-around experience that seamlessly fits all types of users.

At the core of the realme 14 Series 5G are two powerful processors, ensuring smooth performance across all tasks.

The realme 14 Pro+ 5G is equipped with the Snapdragon 7s Gen 3, delivering next-generation efficiency and speed. In comparison, the realme 14 Pro 5G features the Dimensity 7300 Energy 5G Processor, optimized for power and performance.

Both chipsets support dual 5G nano SIM cards, keeping the Squad connected with fast, stable internet at all times. Thanks to improved processing power, the Squad can effortlessly stream high-resolution content and run heavy mobile gaming titles with zero interruptions anytime using only their mobile data.

Compared to the previous generation, both processors deliver enhanced speed and responsiveness, allowing apps to load faster and multitasking to feel incredibly seamless.

A powerhouse device needs a battery that can keep up thus, the realme 14 Series 5G features a 6000mAh battery,

providing all-day power without constant recharging.

Even with its massive capacity, the battery is packed into a slim design, making both devices easy to hold and carry. The 6000mAh Battery also has long-life capacity so the Squad can expect that their device will maintain good battery health even after years of daily use.

For those moments when a quick charge is needed, plugging in the phones for just a few minutes before heading out provides enough charge to last throughout the day, thanks to realme's SUPERVOOC technology.

The realme 14 Pro+ 5G comes with an 80W SUPERVOOC Charge, reaching from zero to 50% in just 23 minutes and a full charge in under an hour. Meanwhile, the realme 14 Pro 5G supports 45W SUPERVOOC Charge, reaching 50% in 36 minutes.

The realme 14 Pro+ 5G is also perfect for those who need massive storage, featuring 512GB of internal storage to keep large files easily accessible without worry. Game files, high-resolution movies, and endless recordings fit effortlessly, making it the ideal device for media lovers.

For seamless multitasking, the realme 14 Pro+ 5G also offers up to 26GB of total RAM, thanks to realme's Dynamic RAM Expansion technology. With 14GB of additional Virtual RAM, multitasking feels more seamless, reducing lags and improving response time, perfect for users who demand the most from their devices.

vivo Y19s

Smartphone

PHP6,499

WEEKENDS are all about unwinding, exploring, and capturing new experiences. Whether you're chasing breathtaking sunrises, discovering hidden cafés, or simply enjoying a leisurely stroll through the park, having the right smartphone can make all the difference. The vivo Y19s is built to keep up with your adventures, offering long-lasting power, an advanced camera system, and an affordable price tag that makes it the perfect weekend companion.

A device that can last all day is essential for a jam-packed itinerary. The vivo Y19s is equipped with a powerful 5500mAh battery, ensuring you stay connected from morning hikes to late-night catch-ups with friends. Whether you're on a scenic road trip to Tagaytay, indulging in a food crawl, or heading out on a spontaneous beach escape, this smartphone has enough juice to keep up. And when you do need a recharge, its 15W fast-charge technology gets you back in action in just minutes—perfect for a quick coffee stop before your next adventure.

Memories are best preserved through stunning photos, and the vivo Y19s delivers just that. Featuring a 50MP HD main camera, it captures every detail in vibrant clarity. From sweeping landscapes and golden-hour selfies to candid moments with friends, your weekend snapshots will be worth sharing. If portrait photography is your style, the 5MP Portrait Camera ensures flawless shots that are Instagram-ready. And for those unforgettable nights, the Multi-Styles Night Filters elevate low-light photography, allowing you to capture artistic, well-lit images even in dim settings.

Beyond its power and camera capabilities, the vivo Y19s is built for reliability. Designed to complement an active lifestyle, it offers durability at an accessible price.

For those who seek a device that keeps up with their dynamic lifestyle, the vivo Y19s is the perfect companion. Combining endurance, high-quality photography, and affordability, it ensures that every weekend is an adventure worth remembering.





Xiaomi 15

Smartphone

PHP45,999 (12GB+256GB)

PHP49,999 (12GB+512GB)

WITH ITS SLEEK 6.2-inch AMOLED display, the Xiaomi 15 fits comfortably in your grip, allowing you to seamlessly manage your day without feeling like you're wrestling with a large machine that you can barely operate with one hand. Huge smartphones used to be in, but now, it's about reclaiming your freedom.

But don't let its compact form fool you; just because it's smaller doesn't mean the Xiaomi 15 doesn't pack a serious punch. Its Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Gen 3 chipset means you can effortlessly switch between demanding apps, edit photos on the fly, and even dive into immersive mobile gaming without a hint of lag. This performance keeps up with your pace, ensuring you're always one step ahead of everything you need and want to do.

Speaking of photos, the Xiaomi 15's 50MP camera, powered by AI, transforms everyday moments into stunning memories. Whether you're capturing a vibrant sunset during your evening jog or snapping candid shots at a bustling market, the results are consistently impressive. No more lugging around a heavy and attention-grabbing DSLR just to get in some photos—your pocket-sized powerhouse has you covered.



Of course, the Xiaomi 15 lets you do everything you want all day. Its 5,420mAh battery, coupled with 90W Hypercharging, keeps you powered throughout the day. From morning meetings to late nights out, the Xiaomi 15 is your reliable companion.

The Xiaomi 15 isn't just a phone; it's a lifestyle upgrade in a compact flagship. It offers the best of both worlds: flagship performance in a form factor that seamlessly fits into your life. It's about embracing the freedom to do more without feeling weighed down.



WORDS BY **GIAN DEREK BAMBICO**

BYD SEAL 5

BYD Philippines provided us with a week-long test drive of the new Seal 5 DM-i Dynamic, allowing us to experience its performance in heavy city traffic across Mandaluyong, Makati, and Ortigas. After five days behind the wheel, I came away with the impression that BYD's latest offering could very well set a new benchmark in the subcompact sedan segment.



Photos courtesy of **BYD Philippines**



DESIGN



The Seal 5's design seamlessly integrates into BYD's Ocean series, which is tailored to appeal to younger customers through its use of oceanic-inspired elements like waves and flowing lines. These design cues are consistent across other models in the series, such as the Dolphin and Sea Lion 6. The Seal 5 boasts an aerodynamic profile, a sporty silhouette, and futuristic front and rear lighting that give it a modern, dynamic look.

While the overall design is stylish, the front grille feels somewhat uninspired, resembling a mash-up of chrome lines. However, this is offset by the rear, which exudes a striking resemblance to the iconic aesthetics of European sports cars. At night, the car's side panels enhance its simple yet elegant design, making it appear larger and more premium than it actually is. Although I tested the base model, it felt more luxurious than many non-hybrid competitors which, frankly, pale in comparison given the recent surge in visually appealing hybrids.



EQUIPMENT



The BYD Seal 5 DM-i Dynamic is powered by a 1.5-liter high-efficiency engine that acts as a generator for the battery, delivering a driving experience closer to that of an electric vehicle (EV) than a traditional hybrid. It comes equipped with a massive 12.8-inch rotating touchscreen, wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and a 10.25-inch instrument cluster. While the upholstery feels somewhat tacky for a car in the sub-PHP1M price range, the overall interior exudes an upscale vibe.

The Seal 5's advanced safety features, including the DiPilot intelligent system with regular cruise control and a backup camera, are on par with others in its class. Still, the inclusion of a 360° camera and adaptive cruise control in the base variant would have made it a standout.

One of the car's biggest strengths is its dual-mode capability, which allows it to run in pure EV or hybrid modes. It can be charged using standard charging stations or traditional petrol. A full charge takes just three hours and provides a range of up to 100 km.

Given the limited tech offerings of its competitors at this price point, the Seal 5's base model holds its own against even higher-tier variants of other brands.

TEST DRIVE



Photos courtesy of **BYD Philippines**

USER EXPERIENCE



The Seal 5 delivers a turbo-like pull without the lag. A light press on the accelerator instantly translates to a surge of power, pinning you to your seat. This car feels almost out of place in the city, especially in Manila's notorious traffic. While I didn't have the chance to take it out on the highway, its 179-horsepower and 316Nm of torque suggest it would handle long drives with ease.

That said, I encountered a few minor issues. Reversing felt jerky compared to what I'm used to, which took some



6km/L on the same route. The Seal 5 is so efficient that I didn't even need to recharge, using only about an eighth of the gas in the tank.

VALUE



Priced at PHP948,000, the Seal 5 is a compelling option for budget-conscious buyers. Its hybrid benefits, such as exemption from coding days and

exceptional fuel efficiency in city traffic, check the two most important boxes for urban drivers.

For those seeking additional features like a 360° camera, power seats, dual-zone automatic climate control, two extra speakers, and a 10% boost in horsepower, the higher-tier BYD Seal-5 Premium is available at PHP1,198,000. Even at this price, it remains significantly more affordable than many competitors in the same category.

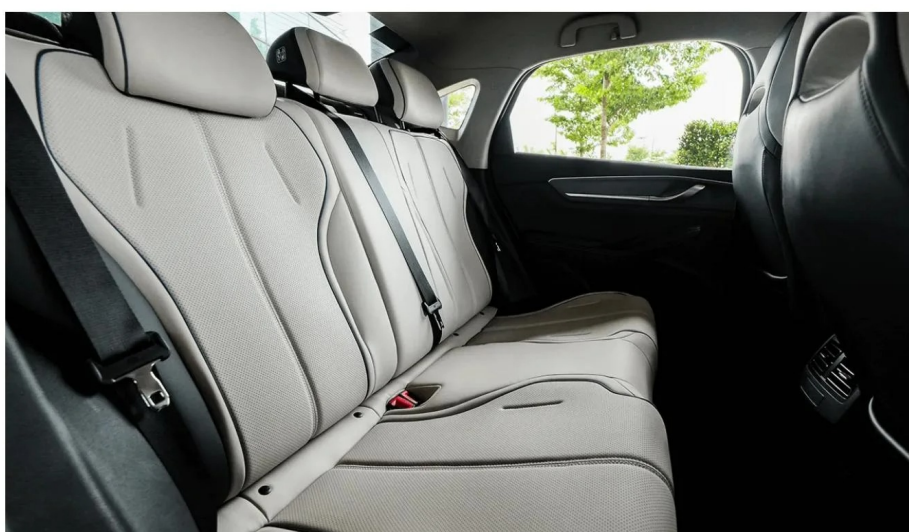
BOTTOM LINE

The BYD Seal-5 Dynamic is a highly capable car poised to shake up the subcompact sedan segment. With its unbeatable value, practicality, and efficiency, it's an all-around excellent choice, especially for first-time hybrid buyers. Whether you're navigating city streets or cruising on the highway, the Seal-5 proves itself as a versatile and economical option.

adjustment on the first day. Fortunately, by the next day, I had adapted to the car's driving dynamics.

The interior is predictably filled with hard plastics, typical for this category. However, the sound system, complemented by the car's impressively low noise, vibration, and harshness (NVH) levels, more than makes up for the lackluster materials.

Fuel efficiency is where the Seal 5 truly shines. During my five-day test drive in heavy EDSA and Makati traffic, I averaged 13km/L — a stark contrast to my diesel SUV, which manages only



THE NEW TOYOTA GR YARIS

**BORN FROM THE WORLD RALLY
CHAMPIONSHIP, THE GR YARIS EVOLVES
FOR BOTH THE TRACK AND THE ROAD**

Toyota Motor Philippines has officially launched the New GR Yaris, a rally-bred performance machine that now offers an automatic transmission for the first time. Designed for enthusiasts who crave high-performance driving with everyday usability, the GR Yaris retains its pure motorsport DNA while integrating new features that enhance power, control, and safety.

Inspired by the World Rally Championship (WRC), the GR Yaris embodies Toyota's commitment to developing ever-better cars through motorsports. Toyota Motor Corporation Chairman Akio Toyoda's vision of "roads building cars" continues to influence the evolution of the GR series, ensuring that this rally-inspired hatchback delivers adrenaline-pumping performance both on and off the track.





Bolder Design, Race-Ready Aesthetics

The New GR Yaris boasts a more aggressive and aerodynamic exterior, enhancing both aesthetic appeal and performance efficiency. The car features forged 18-inch aluminum wheels wrapped in 225/40 tires, LED headlights with daytime running lamps, aerodynamic rear combination lamps, and a race-inspired rear spoiler for enhanced downforce.

Underneath its striking exterior, the GR Yaris is engineered for both track domination and everyday driveability,

making it one of the most versatile high-performance hatchbacks in its segment.

Unrivalled Power and Performance

Beneath the hood, the New GR Yaris houses an upgraded G16E-GTS 1.6L turbocharged engine, delivering an impressive 280PS max output and 390Nm of torque. To ensure consistent high-performance output, Toyota has introduced a new sub-radiator and intercooler spray, improving cooling efficiency during intense driving sessions.

For the first time, the GR Yaris is available in two transmission options, allowing drivers to choose their preferred driving experience:

- **1.6L Turbo A/T:** This variant features an 8-speed direct shift automatic transmission with paddle shifters, designed for seamless gear shifts and quick acceleration without sacrificing performance.
- **1.6L Turbo M/T:** Purists will still enjoy the classic 6-speed intelligent manual transmission, which offers precision control for an engaging and dynamic driving experience.



Toyota has also introduced an upgraded drive mode select system, allowing drivers to fine-tune their experience depending on road conditions and driving preferences.

Driver-Focused Interior with Smart Tech Integration

The cockpit of the New GR Yaris is crafted for performance driving, featuring a full 12.3-inch TFT digital display with an integrated tire pressure monitoring system, ensuring drivers have real-time performance insights at their fingertips.

Entertainment and connectivity are also enhanced with a 7-inch infotainment system, equipped with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto for seamless smartphone integration. Whether on the track or city streets, drivers can stay connected while experiencing Toyota's latest smart driving technology.

Enhanced Safety and Advanced Driving Aids

Toyota has prioritized driver and passenger safety by integrating the Toyota Safety Sense (TSS) package, which now includes:

- Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM) to assist with lane changes
- Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) for added security when reversing
- Intelligent Clearance Sonar for improved parking assistance

Additionally, the automatic variant (A/T) is equipped with Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, offering adaptive speed adjustments for a more relaxed driving experience, while the manual variant (M/T) comes with Adaptive Cruise Control, maintaining the thrill of a hands-on drive with enhanced safety.

Availability and Pricing

The New GR Yaris is available at a starting price of PHP3,391,000 for the 1.6L Turbo M/T and PHP3,550,000

for the 1.6L Turbo A/T. Toyota offers this performance car in four striking color options: Super White, Emotional Red, Precious Black, and the all-new Precious Metal.

Motorsports fans and Toyota enthusiasts were able to see the New GR Yaris up close at Race Weekend 1 of the 2025 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing Philippine Cup on March 22, 2025, at the Clark International Speedway. The event offered fans the chance to witness Toyota's motorsports legacy in action, with free admission for all attendees.

For more details, visit [Toyota Motor Philippines](#) or inquire at the nearest GR performance dealership. A full list of GR-certified dealerships is available at [Toyota GAZOO Racing Philippines](#).





FORD MOBILE SERVICE VEHICLE

**BRINGING SERVICE CONVENIENCE CLOSER TO CUSTOMERS
THROUGH A SERVICE FACILITY ON-THE-GO FOR MAINTENANCE
AND SIMPLE REPAIR PROCEDURES**



Ford Philippines reinforces its commitment to enhance the ownership experience with the launch of the Ford Mobile Service Vehicle (MSV), a service facility on-the-go that aims to provide ease and convenience in owning a Ford vehicle.



As a mobile extension of a Ford dealership service lane, the MSV is equipped with advanced diagnostic systems and are loaded with Ford Genuine Parts and specialized tools, providing customers with a convenient option to have their vehicles serviced at specific locations, which could also include their own homes.

The MSV can perform a wide variety of services, which include Oil Change, Wiper Replacement, Multi-Point Inspections, Tire Rotations, Brake Services, Checking, Boosting and Replacement of Batteries, Replacement of parts such as filters, lamps, bulbs and fluids, Field Service Actions, and Vehicle Software Updating.

As a one-stop shop that brings dealership-quality service directly to customers, the MSV offers an experience

that saves time and eliminates the need for customers to visit a Ford dealership, while getting topnotch service from highly-skilled Ford technicians.

“At Ford, we recognize that our customers lead busy lives and want convenience on their terms. At the same time, they see maintenance and service as essential elements of vehicle ownership. With the Mobile Service Vehicle, we’re bringing dealership-quality service directly to their doorstep,” said Pedro Simoes, managing director, Ford Philippines. “Ford owners can now experience convenient and expert servicing wherever needed, saving them time and ensuring that their vehicle remains in top condition.”

In a product demonstration and walkthrough at the San Lorenzo Village Clubhouse in Makati City,

media guests witnessed the MSV in action with Ford’s expert technicians conducting on-site maintenance on a Ford Territory owned by Vishal Chandiramani, a marketing executive who lives in the same village.

“I love how I can now get my periodic maintenance service done without having to worry about how it will fit my busy schedule. I can have my Ford Territory serviced by Ford technicians at my place of residence even with a full day of meetings and I get to spend weekends with my family. The MSV is definitely a game-changer as it brings Ford’s brand of quality service closer to its customers.”

Proven Success Globally

The MSV has seen successful roll-out in other markets globally like



Thailand, India, South Africa, and Vietnam, delivering over 370,000 experiences in 2024 alone. With MSV, Ford managed to transform traditional servicing into a convenient, on-demand experience with dealers around the world

testifying how the MSV has enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

A New Standard for Automotive Aftersales

The MSV is a testament to Ford setting

a new standard in automotive aftersales. By eliminating the need for dealership visits while ensuring customers get access to genuine parts, advanced tools, and highly-skilled Ford technicians, Ford showcases that it understands and values its customers and their needs.



“The Ford Mobile Service Vehicle is more than a service. It’s our commitment to keep customers moving with confidence. With our fleet of Ford Mobile Service Vehicles, expert and quality vehicle care is now made easier, more accessible and definitely more convenient,” shares Joyce Laxamana, director, Ford Customer Service Division.

Ford owners can now schedule a service appointment with the MSV by contacting their nearest Ford dealership or visiting www.ford.com.ph/service-booking/.



YAMAHA PHILIPPINES RACING TEAM READY TO CHANGE THE RACE THIS 2025



The Yamaha Philippines Racing Team is set to change the race and create champions with its roster for the 2025 season. This year is set to be the most thrilling, ambitious, and game-changing yet with the team locked in for the Asia Road Racing Championship (ARRC), and the continuous cultivation of future champions in the BLU CRU Program. All of this encapsulates the brand's vision and unwavering



commitment to build a legacy of excellence in Filipino racing. Because this year is not just about competing but revolutionizing the sport.

It was a celebration of speed, precision, and pursuit for greatness at the Carmona Racing Circuit. The teams proudly took centerstage as they were honored for their performance from last season. Their dedication and resilience throughout the races not only brought victories but has also inspired countless Filipinos to pursue their dreams.

Front lining the team in the international competition is the "Wonderboy" McKinley Kyle Paz. He is a certified trailblazer that revolutionized the Filipino racing. He has contributed his team's number one overall in the SS600 category in the ARRC with his podium finish in the first round and 7th

place in the individual standings. In the 2024 Inside Racing Grand Prix, he was the UB155 Ltd. GP Champion, SS200 GP Champion, and UB150 Open GP Champion.

"The Rocketboy" April King Mascardo is finally back on the track after battling a major injury that caused his ARRC stint to be cut short. His early exit from the season gravely affected his team's standing but during his performance, he delivered a remarkable achievement by placing third in the first round. He also achieved the following in the IRGP: 2nd place in the UB155 LTD GP, 2nd place in the SS200 GP, and 1st place in the UB150 Open GP.

Gian Carlo Mauricio is set to pursue a new challenge to further his academic career. Although leaving the sport, his passion and contributions to the team





throughout his 3-year career has left a mark in the Philippine racing. He was race champion in the second round of ARRC in China. In addition, he also dominated national tournaments along with teammates Paz and Mascardo.

The Yamaha satellite racing teams also delivered incredible feats last season. The 4S1M Yamaha Racing Team was recognized for clinching the fourth overall team spot in the UB150 category in the ARRC, led by "The Hitman" JE Inguito. With the SEC Yamaha Racing Team, JD Purino was hailed as 2024 MORAC UB King. While Bethany Tolentino was MORAC SS LW Open Champion. These riders contributed to the team's 4-peat as the UB Team Overall Champion in MORAC.

True to its mission of nurturing young riders, Yamaha Motor Philippines

honored the group of riders who competed in the Yamaha R3 BLU CRU Asia-Pacific Championship. Mytchell Ngo achieved 18th overall and was the Strong Comeback Awardee, Zain Doblada was 15th overall and the Most Improved Awardee, and Moy Reyes was 9th overall in the rider standing. Coach Joey Rivero was also recognized as the official coach of the Yamaha Blu Cru Rider Development Program & Blu Cru R3.



The Yamaha Philippines Racing Team is off to a bold new era. With the presentation of the new liveries symbolizing the start of a new season and a renewed passion to dominate every step of the way. With this comes the addition of the newest member of the team to finally complete the lineup.

To ensure that the new rider embodies what it takes to join the





team, aspirants went through the “Yamaha Challenge Cup.” Where they underwent a rigorous series of physical and mental evaluations. These include flexibility, strength and endurance, reflex assessment, race aptitude, and behavior. Kyle Paz and April King played a key role in the tryouts, analyzing the aspirants’ skills to ensure they complemented the team’s dynamic. Throughout the process, the candidates demonstrated remarkable determination and perseverance.

Among them, EJ Sobretudo was recognized as the standout performer, securing his place on the racing team. EJ has rightfully secured his place in the lineup, thanks to his skills, determination, and competitive spirit. He is set to compete in the UB150 category alongside April King Mascardo. To celebrate this

achievement, the riders completed a lap on the racetrack, marking their first official ride as a unified team.

The pursuit of greatness goes beyond merely crossing the finish line; it’s about redefining what’s possible on the racetrack. From local and international competitions to nurturing young talent, the team is committed to exemplifying the true essence of a champion. Every

turn, every lap, and every victory represents a revolution, and Yamaha Motor Philippines is dedicated to transforming the racing landscape and building a legacy of excellence in Filipino motorsport.

As the 2025 season kicks off, the Yamaha Philippines Racing Team is poised to excel in every aspect and change the race.



Stay updated by following Yamaha on socials:
 Website: <https://www.yamaha-motor.com.ph/index.html>
 Racing FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/yamaharacingph>
 YT Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/yamahamotorphils>
 IG: <https://www.instagram.com/yamahaphilippines?hl=en>
 TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@yamahamotorph>
 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/YamahaMotorPH>



TAKE COMMAND WITH THE ALL-NEW NMAX TECH MAX

Do you ever wonder what it's like to live in a world where you are in control of everything? Where every decision, every direction, and every command is within your reach. The power to control, to get whatever you desire, be in charge of every situation, and fuel success every step of the way.

Driven by the desire to stay ahead, taking command allows you to have full control of every aspect of your life. Whether it's your career, or personal life, whatever situation it may be, you can have it all wrapped within your fingertips. The world is yours. You are the master of your fate and the captain of your soul.

Exuding prestige and performance with every ride, the all-new Yamaha NMAX Tech MAX serves as your instrument of precision and control. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the advanced



features and condensed elements are designed to respond to your every command. Boasting of its premium masculinity, it also provides top of its class riding experience, where every ride is a statement, every turn is a decision, and every movement is yours to control.

Yamaha Motor Philippines took command to the next level at Arcovia City with an exclusive offer for the first 155 customers who want to master the art of control. Providing advance access to 155 limited slots of the all new Yamaha NMAX Tech MAX entails customers with the privilege to be the first to own the brand new motorcycle.

Take command by scanning the QR code and reserve yours now! This exclusive offer will run from March 6-11, 2025. The release of the purchased units will be on March 15, 2025 at Arcovia City, Pasig.



XPRESS ARANGKADA

INNOVATIVE HYPERLOCAL CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO REVOLUTIONIZE LAST-MILE COMMUTING

Xpress, one of the fastest-growing transportation network companies in the Philippines, has launched a new initiative aimed at improving urban mobility in Metro Manila. The initiative, called “Xpress Arangkada,” was launched at the LRT-1 Dr. Santos Station in partnership with Light Rail Manila Corporation (LRMC). This event brought together local government officials, industry leaders, driver-partners, and commuters.





Xpress Arangkada is a hyperlocal campaign that focuses on providing seamless, efficient, and commuter-friendly transportation solutions. The initiative reinforces Xpress's mission to empower drivers, promote economic opportunities, and enhance commuter convenience.

What's in it for commuters?

Xpress Arangkada offers a range of benefits designed to improve the daily commute:

- **Faster Rides:** A new algorithm ensures quicker connections between passengers and drivers, reducing waiting times.
- **Cheaper Fares:** New users can enjoy a 50% discount on their first ride, and everyone can take advantage of an ongoing 20% discount on all MotoTaxi and CarTaxi trips to or from the Dr. Santos LRT-1 Station.
- **Convenient Connections:** The initiative strengthens first- and last-mile connectivity to LRT-1 stations, making it easier to integrate Xpress rides into journeys that use multiple modes of transport.

More than just rides

Beyond these core benefits, Xpress Arangkada also features exciting initiatives like:

- **Test Drives:** Passengers can

experience the latest in electric and hybrid vehicle technology firsthand.

- **Rewards and Giveaways:** Opportunities to win discounts and other prizes through the Xpress Super App.

A collaborative effort

This initiative is the result of a strong partnership between Xpress and LRMC, both committed to enhancing the commuter experience.

Jacqueline Gorospe, LRMC Head of Corporate Communications and Customer Relations, emphasized that: "At LRMC, we are always seeking innovative ways to improve comfort and commuter accessibility to/ from LRT-1 stations. This amazing collaboration with Xpress Super App is a big and important step forward in ensuring that every trip is seamless, safe, and efficient."

Xpress Head of Operations Joshua Callueng added, "We are here to innovate with a purpose—making transportation more accessible, rewarding, and seamless for our passengers and driver partners."

Empowering Drivers

Xpress Arangkada also prioritizes the well-being of its driver-partners,

offering:

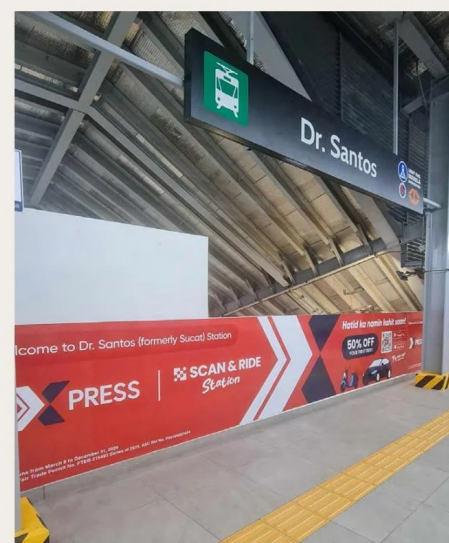
- **Performance-based incentives:** Rewarding efficient and reliable service.
- **Support for Sustainable Vehicles:** 0% commission for drivers who upgrade to electric vehicles.
- **Income Stability:** Guaranteed earnings in specific zones to provide a more predictable income.
- **Recruitment Bonuses:** Expanding the driver network with attractive incentives for new drivers.

Xpress President Cliff Cabungcal reiterated the company's commitment to drivers, stating, "We are committed to building a transport system that benefits not just passengers but also the hardworking drivers who keep our cities moving."

A New Chapter in Urban Mobility

Xpress Arangkada represents a significant step forward in the evolution of transportation in Metro Manila. By focusing on both rider experience and driver well-being, Xpress is setting a new standard for urban mobility in the Philippines.

Download the Xpress Super App today and experience the future of urban transport!





(L-R) MOVE IT General Manager Wayne Jacinto, Grab Philippines Director for Mobility EJ Dela Vega, Ateneo Finance Vice President Eloisa D. Balmoris, Ateneo Bulatao Center for Psychological Services Director for Research Maria Lourdes Mesa, and Head Research Proponent Dr. Maria Isabel E. Melgar.



REVOLUTIONIZING ROAD SAFETY

GRAB, MOVE IT PIONEER BEHAVIORAL APPROACH TO DRIVER ONBOARDING

Grab Philippines and its strategic partner for motorcycle taxi services MOVE IT are set to transform the ride-hailing industry's assessment, onboarding, and training processes.

In collaboration with the Ateneo Bulatao Center for Psychological Services, the ride-hailing platforms are pioneering the industry's foray

into evidence-based, behavior-focused assessment and training programs tailored specifically for ride-hailing drivers.

The partnership is geared at developing a more holistic approach to the way the ride-hailing platforms work with drivers, aiming to introduce tools and policies that recognize behavioral and cognitive factors that influence driver

performance. This marks a shift toward a more nuanced and data-driven standard for ride-hailing platforms – elevating current traditional assessment metrics and requirements like driving skills tests and police records.

The pilot implementation of policy and process changes resulting from this partnership is scheduled for the second quarter of 2025.



collaboration with the Ateneo Bulatao Center for Psychological Services, we are elevating the standards on driver assessment and training to reinforce desirable driver behaviors and mindsets that align with Grab's core values. We are confident that these enhancements will not only propel the long-term success of our driver-partners but also strengthen our shared commitment to safety."

MOVE IT general manager Wayne Jacinto highlighted the importance of continuously improving the standards within the motorcycle taxi community, especially as the country approaches the passage of the motorcycle taxi law. "At MOVE IT, we are committed to always enhancing safety standards on our platform in close collaboration with Grab. As the number of two-wheel drivers on the road grows — whether as private riders or part of the motorcycle taxi community — we remain steadfast in fostering a culture of respect, responsible riding, and safety on all of our roads, for every motorist. This initiative with the Ateneo Bulatao

Center for Psychological Services is a manifestation of this commitment."

Maria Lourdes Mesa, director for research at the Ateneo Bulatao Center for Psychological Services, expressed her enthusiasm: "It is encouraging to see leaders in the ride-hailing industry take proactive steps to ensure that services provided to Filipino commuters prioritize safety. By integrating a behavior-focused approach into the assessment processes, we are proactively addressing the potential for drivers to act contrary to safety standards due to any existing psychological predispositions. We are proud to be pioneering partners with Grab and MOVE IT in this historical milestone — adding a new layer to our safety and security measures for the fast-growing four- and two-wheel ride-hailing industries."

The first phase of the program, focused on data gathering and research, is currently underway across various locations in Metro Manila, Cebu, and Davao, engaging a diverse set of driver- and rider-partners from Grab and MOVE IT.

To ensure the program is grounded in extensive research, Grab, MOVE IT, and the Ateneo team are utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods to gain insights into driver behavior, socio-demographic backgrounds, and passenger perceptions. This research includes interviews, focus groups, and data analysis aimed at identifying patterns that influence road behavior and encourage a safety-first mentality among drivers.

Grab Philippines director for mobility EJ Dela Vega stated, "At Grab, we are guided by the principle of 'Kaizen,' which emphasizes continuous improvement. As safety and security are among our core commitments to users of our platform, we are constantly innovating and raising standards to deliver on these. Through our



The integration of psychological and behavioral principles into driver assessment, onboarding, and training is a groundbreaking initiative designed to enhance the evaluation and upskilling processes of ride-hailing platforms—setting new industry standards for safety, professionalism, and service excellence.



HONDA WINNER X

THE ULTIMATE MOTORCYCLE UPGRADE
FOR THRILL-SEEKERS

The call of adventure is stronger than ever, and for those seeking a motorcycle that delivers both power and style, the Honda Winner X is the perfect answer. More than just an upgrade, this cutting-edge sports cub combines dynamic aesthetics, top-tier engineering, and unmatched fuel efficiency, making it an exceptional choice for both daily commutes and exhilarating weekend rides. Whether navigating urban streets or cruising coastal highways, the Winner X is built to dominate every journey while keeping comfort and control at the forefront.

Unmatched Power and Performance

At the heart of the Winner X is a 149cc 4-Stroke, 4-Valve DOHC engine that delivers a thrilling 11.5kW max power at 9,000rpm and 13.5Nm torque at 7,000rpm. This level of performance ensures instant acceleration and effortless cruising, whether tackling steep inclines or navigating tight corners. Its liquid-cooled system prevents overheating, allowing the engine to perform smoothly even in extreme conditions, making it a reliable companion for cross-country trips.

Designed with efficiency in mind, the Winner X boasts an impressive 52.3km/L fuel rating, based on the World Motorcycle Test Cycle (WMTC). This allows riders to embark on extended adventures without constantly worrying about fuel consumption, making long-distance road trips more enjoyable and cost-effective.

Confidence and Stability on Every Ride

Safety and control are essential for any rider, and the Winner X is equipped with ABS (Anti-lock Braking System) variants, ensuring precise braking and improved stability even on wet or slippery roads. Whether maneuvering

through bustling city traffic or descending winding mountain roads, the ABS system prevents skidding, giving riders greater confidence in their braking response.

For those who love technical rides with sudden stops and fast acceleration, the Assist and Slipper Clutch enhances gear transitions, preventing rear-wheel locking during abrupt downshifts. This provides a smoother and more controlled riding experience, especially when navigating unpredictable road conditions.

Designed for Comfort and Convenience

Honda understands that long rides should be as comfortable as they are exciting. The Winner X features an ergonomic seat design, ensuring superior riding posture for extended trips. Whether it's a weekend road trip or a scenic mountain escape, riders can enjoy hours on the road without discomfort.

The USB charging port in ABS variants allows riders to stay connected while on the go, making it easy to use GPS navigation, capture travel moments, or play music without worrying about battery life. Meanwhile, the Smart Key System enhances security with a built-

in safety sensor and anti-theft alarm, ensuring peace of mind wherever the Winner X is parked.

Aesthetics That Turn Heads

While performance is paramount, the Winner X is also designed to make a statement on the road. With its fully digital meter panel, all-LED lighting system, and sculpted fairings, it exudes a sporty, race-inspired look. The motorcycle's sharp lines and premium finishes reinforce its bold and aggressive styling, perfect for riders who want their machine to stand out.

The Winner X comes in three distinct variants, each tailored for different personalities and preferences:

- The Standard Variant (PHP 123,900), available in Pearl Iceberg White and Infinity Red, offers a dynamic, sporty aesthetic that commands attention.
- The ABS Premium (PHP 129,900), available in Matte Galaxy Black Metallic and Matte Meteoric Red Metallic, adds a refined, high-end appeal with a gold 3D Winner X emblem.
- The ABS Racing Variant (PHP 131,900), available in Infinity Red, embraces the essence of a sports bike, featuring gold cast wheels and a striking 3D emblem for a bold, high-performance look.

The Ultimate Ride for Champions

The Honda Winner X is more than just a motorcycle—it's an invitation to ride with power, precision, and confidence. Whether upgrading from a first bike or seeking a machine that balances style, power, and practicality, the Winner X promises an exhilarating and reliable riding experience for every journey.

For those ready to take their riding game to the next level, the Winner X delivers a seamless blend of performance, technology, and comfort—making every ride an adventure worth taking.



HONDA
The Power of Dreams

Ride Like a Champion with the Winner X

The Standard Variant



Pearl Iceberg White
Infinity Red
(Php 123,900)

The ABS Premium



Matte Meteoric Red Metallic
Matte Galaxy Black Metallic
(Php 129,900)



ABS Racing
(Php 131,900)

MIDEA U: SPLIT-WINDOW-TYPE S

Innovative design brings split-type performance with window-type simplicity for effortless comfort and energy efficiency.

Midea, a global leader in home appliance innovation, has introduced a revolutionary new air conditioning solution with the launch of the Midea U Window/Split Air Conditioner Series. As the first of its kind in the Philippines, this hybrid cooling system combines the energy efficiency and quiet operation of a split-type air conditioner with the easy installation of a window-type unit. Designed to cater to modern households, this innovative appliance delivers unmatched cooling performance, convenience, and cost-effectiveness, setting a new benchmark in home climate control.



-TYPE POWER, SIMPLICITY

Revolutionizing Home Cooling with Smart, Efficient Technology

Unlike conventional air conditioning units, the Midea U Window/Split Air Conditioner features a distinctive U-shaped design that allows for superior cooling while maintaining a compact and stylish form. The design ensures whisper-quiet operation, mirroring the experience of a high-end split-type unit, while its installation remains as simple as a traditional window-type air conditioner.

At the core of this new series is Midea's Inverter Quattro compressor, which optimizes cooling power while maintaining significant energy efficiency. The units are available in 1.0HP and 1.5HP capacities, catering to a range of room sizes and user needs. With a 5-Star Energy Rating, the Midea U series is among the most energy-efficient air conditioners on the market, helping homeowners reduce electricity consumption without sacrificing comfort.

A Commitment to Innovation and User-Centric Design

Midea has consistently focused on enhancing the quality of life for Filipino households by integrating state-of-the-art technology with user-friendly designs. The Midea U Window/Split Air Conditioner Series reflects this mission, offering consumers a modern, efficient, and accessible cooling solution that fits seamlessly into any home.

With this latest innovation, Midea continues to push the boundaries of home appliance design, proving that comfort, efficiency, and affordability can go hand in hand.

Designed for Modern Homes and Lifestyles

Midea has engineered this air conditioner series with user convenience as a priority. Installation is hassle-free and cost-effective, eliminating the need for expensive professional services often required by traditional split-type units. This makes it an ideal choice for apartment dwellers, homeowners looking to upgrade their cooling solutions, and anyone seeking a balance between performance and simplicity.

Beyond cooling efficiency, the Midea U Window/Split Air Conditioner integrates smart technology for enhanced user control. Equipped with Wi-Fi Smart Control, users can adjust temperature settings, fan speed, and other functions remotely, ensuring a comfortable indoor climate even before arriving home. Whether used in family living spaces or work areas, the device allows for complete climate customization at the touch of a button.

For households requiring even more powerful cooling capabilities, Midea's Wonder AC Series offers 2.0HP and 2.5HP variants, providing greater cooling capacity while maintaining the same cutting-edge Full DC Inverter technology. Both the Midea U and Wonder AC models deliver top-tier performance while keeping energy consumption manageable, making them a cost-effective long-term investment.



Rakuten Viber

DATING

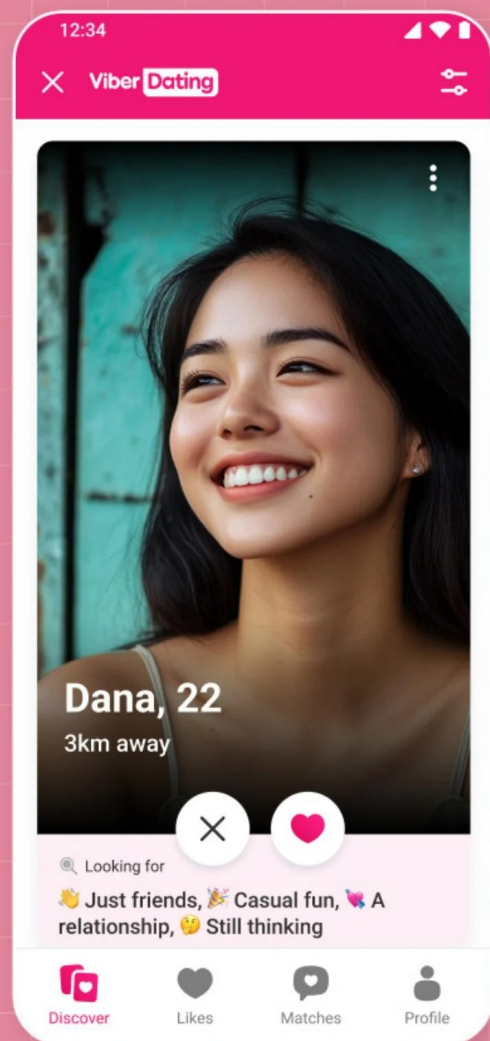
Skip the scams, not the sparks



Sure, there are plenty of fish in the sea, but finding The One can be a long and winding journey. In today's online dating world, it's a minefield of scams and catfishing. What's more, most dating apps keep you stuck in a loop of swipes that rarely go anywhere because they make money as long as you use them — ouch!

It's time to ditch this fishy business with **Rakuten Viber**. The super app trusted for fostering meaningful connections on a secure platform now offers **Viber Dating**, a new in-app feature that helps Filipinos meet real people and make real connections. Starting Valentine's Day 2025, **Viber Dating** has been officially available in the Philippines, making Viber the first-ever communications app to offer an innovative and moderated dating solution. This gives Filipinos a safe and secure way to find their match or simply meet new friends, and then continue to build lasting relationships in the same app.

When it comes to online dating, many people are concerned about engaging in bots and fake profiles, or falling for scams — and rightfully so. In a survey by **Pew Research Center**, only 48% of U.S. adults say that online dating is a very or somewhat safe way to meet people. In fact, 52% of those who have used dating sites and apps say they have come across someone they think was trying to scam them. The same is true for many Filipinos, as a 2024 **report** by global information solutions provider TransUnion has revealed that the digital fraud rate in Filipino dating platforms and other online communities is at 18%, which is much higher than the global average of 11.5%.



With **Viber Dating**, users can finally feel confident when looking for connections online, as protecting their users' privacy has always been an essential and paramount part of Rakuten Viber's mission from the start. This strict commitment is extended to **Viber Dating** by following stringent measures:

Profile verification:

Only verified Viber users can create profiles. Every Viber Dating user is real and registered with their mobile number.

Hidden phone numbers:

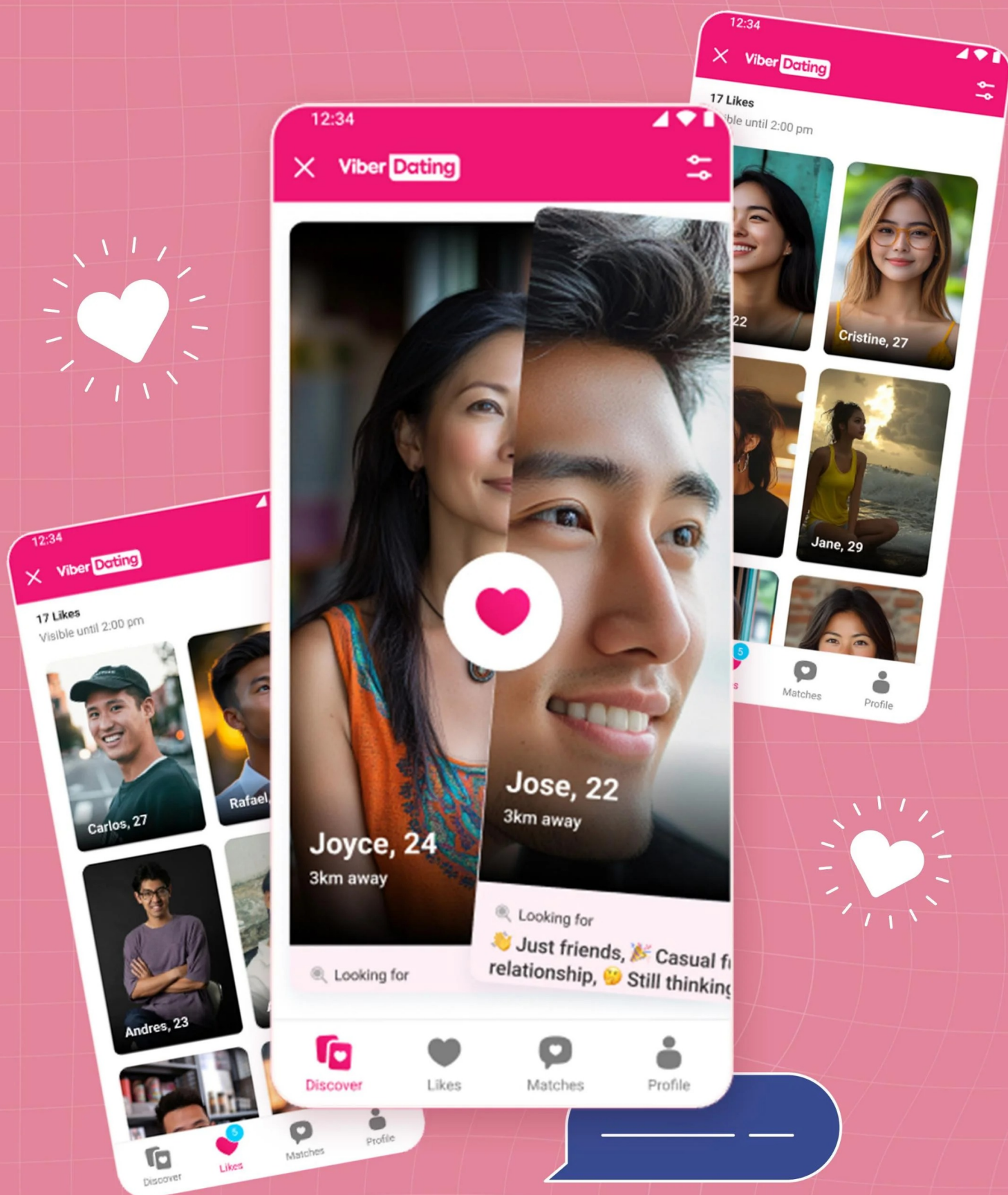
Your phone number remains completely hidden, ensuring that no personal contact information is ever shared during your dating experience unless you choose to share it.

Moderation

techniques include machine and human moderators, for a positive experience for all.

Separate chats:

Your dating profile is separate from your main Viber account, keeping your dating activity private from your primary connections.



As a trusted name in communication for over a decade, Viber has been facilitating secure and safe communication for new couples for years, especially during the second stage of dating—after they’ve met and moved away from using dating apps. Viber now fixes the first stage of dating too: enabling people to find meaningful connections. Unlike other dating apps, when you meet someone special through Viber Dating, you can smoothly transition to Viber’s main app, where you can keep the conversation going and continue building your connection in a secure and private space. Here, all private 1:1 chats and calls as well as private group calls are end-to-end encrypted by default, and messages are never stored in Viber’s servers once delivered.

Viber also understands that you may want to keep your dating life private. That’s why your dating profile will be strictly separate from your primary Viber account, and will only be visible to other *Viber Dating* users. Your main Viber connections will never know or be notified when you are signing up to and using the dating feature nor see your dating-related conversations and activities. *Viber Dating* is accessible in a separate tab from your Chats.

David Tse, senior director at Rakuten Viber APAC, shares that *Viber Dating* was developed after a series of focus groups with Viber users revealed that people want genuine connections with real people and high-quality matches, but were very concerned about keeping their identities private and under their control until they feel comfortable enough to reveal it. “Viber’s mission as a super app is to create safe and trusted connections, and this extends to the dating world, providing users with much-needed peace of mind,” says Tse. “Given these measures, we hope we can further protect our users from fake profiles and love scams.”

As a very first step, simply create a profile with your dating preferences — it’s totally free. You are encouraged to add photos and share a quick bio about yourself, including your hobbies and interests. After creating your profile, Viber shows you potential matches based on your preferences, and you can swipe left or right if you are interested or not. If both of you are interested in each other, you will be matched, and this unlocks the opportunity to chat only within the *Viber Dating* platform—again, separate from your regular private and group chats. To enhance the dating experience, premium features like Who Liked Me are already available in the Philippines. These features will roll out globally and be joined by more in the coming months.

“Viber has been built to create meaningful and secure connections for our users, and we’re excited to now extend this commitment to the world of dating. For many, online fraud has taken the joy out of meeting new people, while the frustration of being stuck with expensive apps that leave them feeling trapped and single continues to grow. As a super app, we are here to break this cycle and bring back the excitement of real connections with real people,” emphasizes Tse.

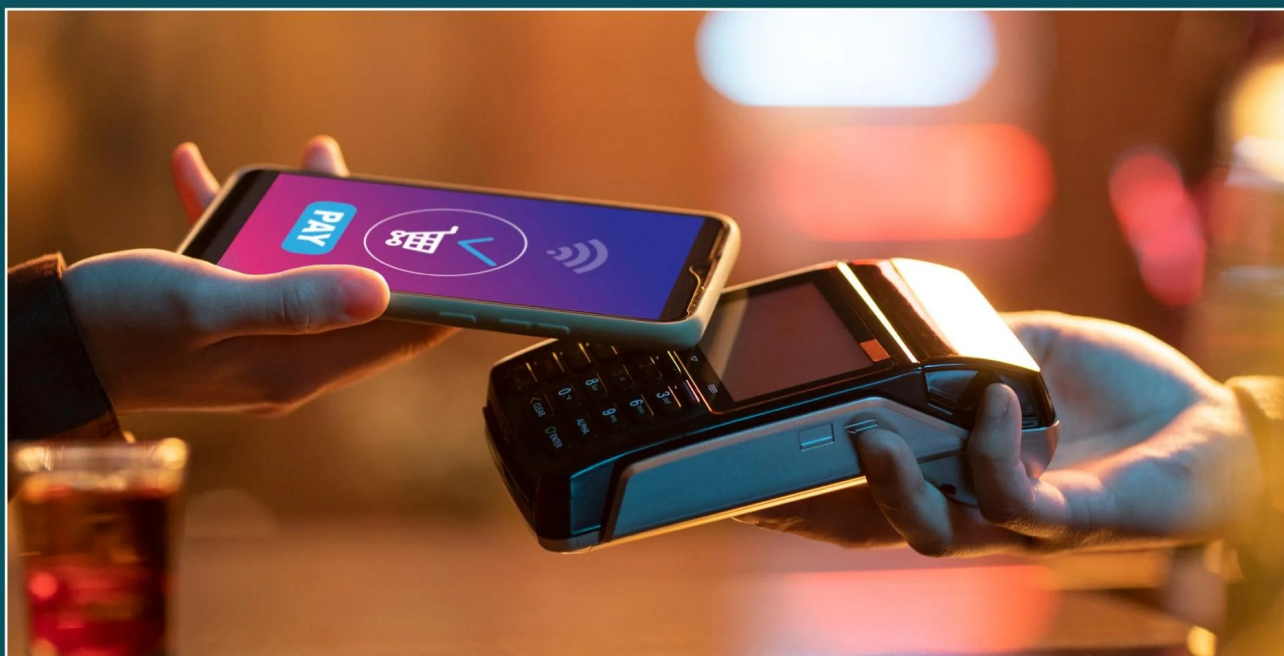
Finding genuine connections online doesn’t have to be a tale of endless trial and error. Date with confidence and peace of mind. Date Safer with ***Viber Dating* on Rakuten Viber!**

Sign up for *Viber Dating* now for free. *Viber Dating* will be introduced in other countries soon.

2C2P by Antom

HOW SOUTHEAST ASIA BUYS AND PAYS

E-Commerce is expected to reach new heights, driven by digital payments and cross-border commerce growth



The latest InfoBrief by market intelligence firm IDC, commissioned by global payments platform 2C2P and Antom, revealed that Southeast Asia's (SEA's) e-commerce market is projected to reach USD325 billion by 2028. This growth is fuelled by the rapid adoption of digital payments and regional interoperability, which will unlock more opportunities for businesses in cross-border commerce.

This year's research paper, *"How Southeast Asia Buys and Pays 2025,"* marks the fourth edition of the IDC InfoBrief since 2021. IDC surveyed 600 respondents across six Southeast Asian (SEA) markets — Indonesia, Philippines,

Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam — examining the evolving digital payments landscape as a whole and in each market. As the fifth largest economy in the world, SEA's exceptional growth trajectory is largely driven by its rapidly expanding e-commerce sector, underpinned by increasing digital payment adoption.

The research explores the region's evolving digital payments landscape and provides a market-specific analysis of the payment trends in each market. It also sheds light on how these trends are reshaping business strategies and laying the foundation for future growth opportunities in the region.

Key highlights from the IDC InfoBrief:

It is critical to have a comprehensive understanding of SEA's digital payment landscape to fully tap into this USD325b economy. To maximize reach within local markets, it is essential to offer customers their preferred payment methods to enhance the overall customer experience and drive higher conversion rates.

- **Growth in ecommerce digital payments:** By 2028, digital payments are expected to account for 94% of total e-commerce payments in Southeast Asia. The most significant growth can be seen in domestic payments (97.9%) and mobile wallets (94.9%), which have been instrumental in expanding the reach of ecommerce in regions that traditionally relied less on cards.
- **Surge in Real-time payments (RTPs):** RTPs will see exponential growth in 2028, reaching over USD11 trillion. This is already evident in Singapore, where RTPs like PayNow are the third most supported payment method, according to surveyed merchants in 2024. The rise in RTPs in Southeast Asia is largely driven by government initiatives to reduce cash reliance and promote lower-cost, fast-payment methods that meet the needs of both consumers and merchants.
- **Dominance of Mobile Wallets and Domestic Payments:** Mobile wallets and domestic payments lead in popularity across Southeast Asia. In 2023, mobile wallets were the top choice in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam, while domestic payments dominated in Singapore and Thailand. This trend continued in 2024, with mobile wallets being the second most accepted payment method by surveyed merchants in Singapore and the Philippines and the third in Indonesia and Thailand.

There are also significant opportunities across SEA in intra-SEA cross-border commerce.

- **Opportunities in cross-border commerce:** Intra-SEA cross-border commerce is projected to reach USD14.6 billion by 2028, a 2.8 times growth from 2023. Notably, except for Vietnam and Indonesia, average cross-border transaction values per customer surpass domestic values in SEA markets, highlighting significant opportunities for businesses operating in the region.
- **Driving cross-border commerce with Regional Payment Connectivity (RPC):** Cross-border commerce is further supported by initiatives such as the RPC, joined by all six markets in the SEA region.

The collaboration aims to strengthen and streamline inter-country payments, focusing on the development of seamless, efficient, and cost-effective cross-border transactions.

- **Higher returns in cross-border commerce:** For 62% of surveyed SEA merchants who sold their services and products across borders, such transactions were, on average, 21% higher than domestic transactions. Merchants stand to reap significant rewards by looking beyond their shores and building up their capacity to cater to neighboring markets.
- **Untapped potential of intra-SEA trade:** Despite its promising growth, intra-SEA trade remains underutilized, accounting for only a tiny fraction of total cross-border commerce in each market. To fully capitalize on this, merchants must gain a deeper understanding of the distinctive operating environments in each market while leveraging shared advantages. By strategically addressing these factors, businesses can unlock the full potential of intra-regional trade and drive sustainable growth.

Agnes Chua, managing director of business and product development of 2C2P, stated, "Southeast Asia's e-commerce landscape is evolving at a breathtaking pace. Merchants recognize the immense opportunities this growth brings them in driving e-commerce revenue and acknowledge the increasing complexity it brings to their operations. This includes common challenges such as customer support and issue resolution, payment gateway integration, and technology issues. At 2C2P, we empower businesses to navigate these challenges with confidence by delivering payment solutions that simplify operations, enhance cross-border capabilities, and drive growth in the region's rapidly expanding digital economy so merchants can quickly unlock new opportunities and thrive in this dynamic environment."

Gary Liu, general manager of Antom, Ant International, said, "Southeast Asia is rapidly emerging as a global hub for digital commerce and innovation. As businesses expand across borders, seamless and efficient transactions are essential for maintaining competitiveness. At Antom, we see payments not just as infrastructure but as a catalyst for business growth. By working with 2C2P and other businesses within Ant International's ecosystem, we empower merchants with unified payment and digitization solutions covering the full payment lifecycle while exploring opportunities in global account services, financing, and treasury management to support their expansion further. Through close collaboration with local regulators and industry partners, we aim to unlock new opportunities for businesses of all sizes, helping them thrive in Southeast Asia's evolving digital economy."



TAKE THE DEEPPFAKE DETECTION TEST



New research from iProov, the world's leading provider of science-based biometric identity verification solutions, reveals that most people struggle to detect deepfakes—highly realistic AI-generated videos and images designed to impersonate real people. The study, which tested 2,000 UK and US consumers, found that only 0.1% of participants could accurately distinguish real content from deepfakes.

Key Findings

Deepfake detection is alarmingly low

Only 0.1% of respondents correctly identified all deepfake and real stimuli (images and videos) even when primed to look for them. In real-world scenarios, where awareness is lower, the vulnerability is likely even greater.

Deepfake videos are harder to detect than images

Participants were 36% less likely to correctly identify a synthetic video compared to a synthetic image, raising concerns about fraud risks in video calls and identity verification.

Older generations are more vulnerable

About 30% of 55-64 year-olds and 39% of those aged 65+ had never heard of deepfakes, highlighting a significant knowledge gap that increases susceptibility to deception.

Deepfakes are widely misunderstood

While awareness is rising, 22% of consumers had never heard of deepfakes before participating in the study.

False confidence is rampant

Despite poor detection skills, over 60% of participants believed they were good at spotting deepfakes. This overconfidence was particularly pronounced among young adults (18-34 years old).

Social media trust erodes

Platforms like Meta (49%) and TikTok (47%) are seen as the primary sources of deepfake content, leading 49% of consumers to trust social media less after learning about deepfakes. However, only one in five would report a suspected deepfake.

Deepfakes fuel societal concerns

74% of respondents worry about the impact of deepfakes, with 68% citing fake news and misinformation as their primary concerns. Among older adults, concern rises to 82%.

Consumers fail to verify online information

Despite the rising threat, only 11% critically analyze sources, while only one in four actively search for alternative sources when they suspect a deepfake.

Lack of reporting mechanisms

48% of consumers don't know how to report deepfakes, and 29% take no action at all when encountering one.

Expert Insights and Industry Impact

Professor Edgar Whitley, a digital identity expert at the London School of Economics and Political Science, highlights the growing challenge: “Security experts have long warned of the threats posed by deepfakes. This study confirms that organizations can no longer rely on human judgment alone and must adopt advanced authentication solutions to combat deepfake risks.”

iProov CEO Andrew Bud reinforces the urgency: “With just 0.1% of people able to accurately identify deepfakes, both consumers and organizations remain highly vulnerable to fraud. Criminals are exploiting this blind spot, putting personal and financial security at risk. Technology companies must take responsibility by implementing robust biometric security measures, such as facial authentication with liveness detection, to protect against these evolving threats.”

The Growing Threat of Deepfakes

Deepfake technology is advancing rapidly. iProov’s 2024 Threat Intelligence Report revealed a 704% increase in face swaps, a technique commonly used in deepfakes, over the past year. These AI-generated forgeries allow cybercriminals to impersonate individuals, gain unauthorized access to sensitive data, and create fraudulent identities for illicit activities such as loan applications and financial scams. The ability to distinguish truth from fabricated content is becoming increasingly difficult, with major implications for security, trust, and misinformation.

 iProov Can You Spot A DeepFake?

Real or fake?

You’ll see 10 images or videos, one at a time.

Examine each carefully, then choose whether you think it’s genuine or AI-generated.

The clock is ticking, so move quickly for a better score. But remember, accuracy matters.

Good luck!

Total time spent:
00:00:21

1/10



Volume 25 No. 8



00:00:21



What Can Be Done?

As deepfakes become more sophisticated, human detection alone is no longer reliable. Organizations must adopt advanced biometric technology with liveness detection—verifying that an individual is:

- The correct person
- A real person
- Authenticating in real-time

To stay ahead of evolving deepfake techniques, businesses and governments must implement continuous threat detection, improved security protocols, and collaboration with policymakers to combat digital identity fraud effectively.

Take the Deepfake Detection Test

Think you can spot a deepfake? Put your skills to the test! iProov has created an interactive online quiz that challenges users to distinguish between real and AI-generated content. [Take the quiz](#) and see how you score.



THE STATE OF SECURITY AND IDENTITY IN 2025

HID

Security industry embraces mobile credentials, biometrics, and AI — HID Study

As organizations navigate an increasingly complex threat landscape, security leaders are making strategic shifts toward unified platforms and emerging technologies, according to the newly released *2025 State of Security and Identity Report* from HID. The comprehensive study gathered responses from 1,800 partners, end users, and security and IT personnel worldwide, and reveals a significant transformation in how businesses are approaching security, with mobile credentials and artificial intelligence emerging as key drivers of innovation.

“The security industry is at a pivotal moment where the integration of modern technology with existing infrastructure is no longer optional — it’s imperative,” said Ramesh Songukrishnasamy, senior vice president and chief technology officer at HID. “The fact that 73% of security leaders now prioritize software-driven unified solutions shows we’ve moved beyond traditional siloed approaches. Organizations are demanding platforms that can scale with their needs while providing actionable intelligence.”

Key findings from the report include:

A marked increase in mobile credentials and biometrics adoption, signaling a shift away from traditional access methods

The rapid rise of mobile credentials, with 61% of security leaders identifying their proliferation as a top trend, signals a significant shift away from traditional access methods. Nearly two-thirds are either deploying or planning to deploy mobile solutions. Concurrently, demand for biometric technologies such as fingerprint, iris, and facial recognition is on the rise: about 35% of respondents currently use biometric technology, while 13% plan to, indicating significant growth potential in this segment.

Growing demand for unified security management solutions that streamline operations

As organizations diversify security technology today, many security leaders (67%) are making moves to adopt software-driven security solutions, citing that unifying multiple data collection methodologies would be “somewhat” or “very important” (73%) to their organization.

Strong preference for open platforms that facilitate seamless integration

Interoperability has become synonymous with progress across the security industry over the last few years, and the trend continues as more than half of security professionals reported open solutions as being “extremely” or “very” important to their organizations.

Strategic focus on converging platform solutions rather than standalone products

Nearly two thirds of organizations and 73% of integrators and consultants report a shift toward software-driven security solutions that bridge physical and digital functions like video surveillance, access control, and intrusion detection into a more unified platform.

Significant channel transformation driven by digital innovation

The security channel is undergoing significant transformation driven by digital innovation. While 77% of channel partners believe they are adapting well to these changes, growing end-user demand for AI, cloud solutions, IoT integration, and advanced analytics is reshaping service expectations. To thrive, the channel must continuously evolve and adapt to meet the evolving needs of the market and keep pace with digital transformation within the security sector.

Accelerated adoption of AI agents to enhance security operations

AI agents are being rapidly adopted to enhance security operations. Use cases are proliferating across access control, identity management, video, and security management platforms. Key benefits cited include improved efficiency and speed of security processes (50%) and enhanced real-time data analysis capabilities (47%).

Continued emphasis on sustainability in security decision-making, budget allowing

Sustainability is still a key factor in security decision-making, with 75% of security leaders now factoring it into their solution selection process. However, sustainability is not the most critical factor when selecting new solutions as security and cost-effectiveness are still the highest priority for 80% of integrators and consultants.

The full report includes additional global data and further analysis. Read it in its entirety here: <https://www.hidglobal.com/documents/industry-report-2025-state-security-and-identity>.

SID MEIER'S
CIVILIZATION VII



DEVELOPER

Firaxis Games

PUBLISHER

2K

PLATFORM

PC, macOS, Linux, Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S

Words by **Jose Alvarez**

If you've heard the saying "patience is a virtue," then one of the biggest tests of patience is the *Civilization* series. Sid Meier created a behemoth that withstands the test of time and lead to many turn-based strategy game enthusiasts flocking to his creation, even spawning the "4X" genre of games (eXplore, eXpand, eXploit, and eXterminate, each referring to how you can win the game). Being that my love of the series goes back to the time I sunk hours into *Civilization II* on the PlayStation in the mid-1990s, I naturally followed the game to PC and sought to dominate the world, tile by tile.



Forking over a large portion of the contents of my wallet for early access, I started up the game not really knowing what would be in store. *Civilization* releases have gotten sparser, with nine years between *Civilization VI* and *Civilization VII*. Yet, would the game still be as fun as it once was? One thing flashed in my mind when I saw that you could now select a leader independently from a civilization itself: endless possibilities. My hopes were then dashed as you have to now unlock leaders and civilizations (which the mod community has mercifully resolved even before the game's release date of February 11, 2025).



For my first playthrough, I selected the Philippines' own national hero, Jose Rizal, and made him head of the Mississippian culture in my usual strategy of rapid economic and territorial expansion. Between ages, you can change civilizations, which allows you to achieve goals like rapid expansion in the Age of Antiquity, military conquest in the Age of Exploration, and focusing on science in the Modern Age, for example. Each leader and civilization has their own traits as well, and the race to win has many paths—although culture and missionaries seem to have a heavy advantage at the time of this writing.



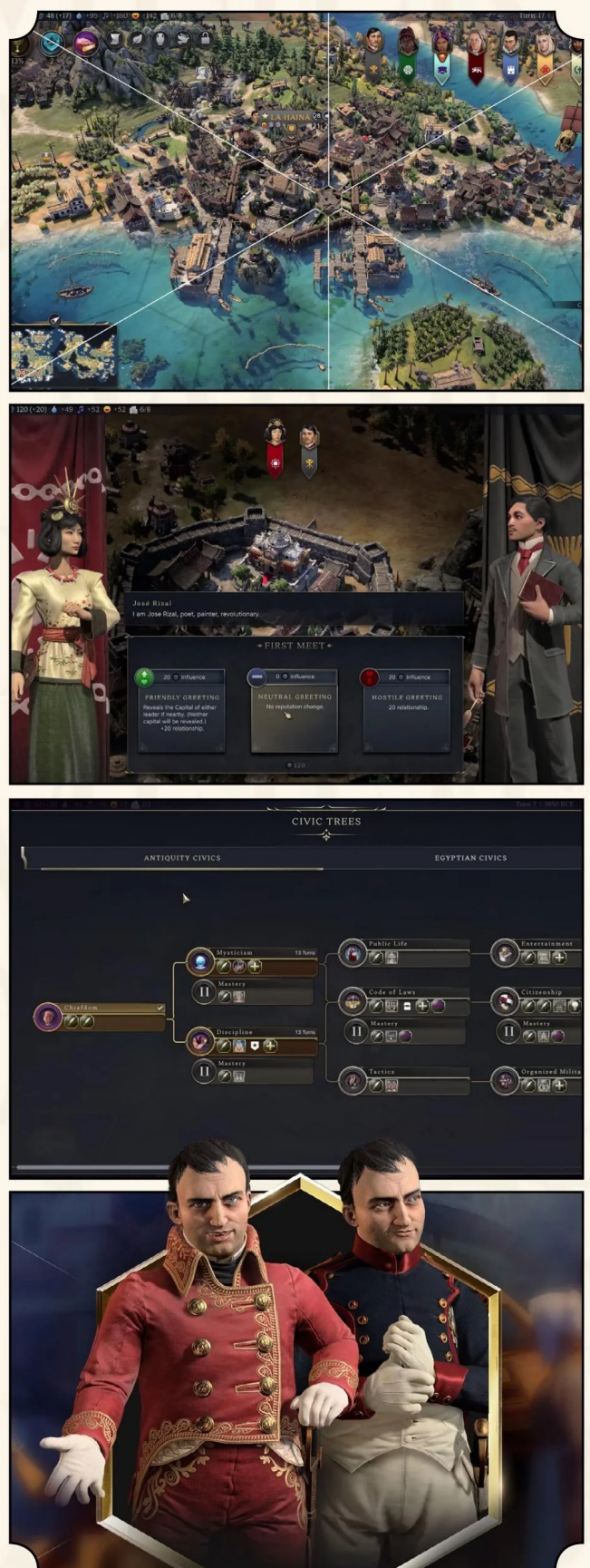
One thing I have to bring up for our younger readers is that this is by no means an easy series, and Firaxis doesn't make it any easier with its Civlopedia entries in this installment. Once robust and teeming with information, the Civlopedia now a shell of its former self. While I have no issue with that, some players do rely heavily on the Civlopedia, and learning what specific units do is important to defend your territory and prevent your enemies from overrunning you with powerful military units (which is what sadly ended my first playthrough, and served as a harsh lesson to do things differently the second time around). Diplomacy is rather complex, as you can choose to steal technologies and civics from other civilizations—something I (ab)used heavily during my second playthrough.



Another mercifully welcome change is that you no longer need to waste turns churning out Workers or Builders to improve tiles—the cities do it for you. However, all cities outside of your capital start as towns, and it costs gold to convert them into cities. As an aggressively expansionist player, controlling the land is paramount. One glaring problem (another that the mod community went and fixed before launch) is the cryptic UI that doesn't show enough information that you need to play, which could hurt those playing at higher difficulty levels. What is unrealistic, however, is that a farm placed on a desert produces as much food as farms on flat grassland—something we all know makes zero sense, but given how quickly towns grow (unless you specialize them to produce fish, science, military units, etc.) this becomes moot once a town is converted into a city.

Game setup has also been pared back significantly. You can no longer set the world age, rainfall, or sea level, and can no longer play on massive maps, which I prefer because this is what 4X games should truly do. Another issue is that your entire army partially resets when you advance to the next age, which means if you're military-minded, you want to conquer early and quickly. The frequency of natural disasters and crises is another thing to take into account, and you might spend turns repairing buildings or improvements or having production completely grind to a halt as a result of the latter. You also have narrative choices which grant you gold, science, culture, happiness, and more, bringing decision-making straight to your doorstep rather than just constructing buildings here and there to improve on your stats.

What makes this installment of *Civilization* great is the music. I was never bored while playing, and the music is a testament to that, as I threw countless hours at the game before its official launch date. Despite its flaws, there is one great thing about online games—things can be patched or fixed or modded (as the dedicated modders of the *Civilization* community have shown us time and again), making the game better over time. While some welcome changes were made, nine years is a long time between releases, and the UI and other gameplay aspects could have been improved on in this period. However, as a longtime fan of the series, I'm willing to give it a chance to improve—after all, who knows when the next installment will come out?



Gaming



Words by Jose Alvarez

Suikoden

幻想水滸伝 I & II **HD REMASTER**

Gate Rune & Dunan Unification Wars



DEVELOPER Konami

PUBLISHER Konami

PLATFORM PC, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S, Nintendo Switch

Has storytelling in games become a lost art? To answer this question, I need to share a little bit more about myself. As a kid, I religiously played Japanese RPGs (JRPGs) due to their amazing storytelling, and thanks to the Internet, I found fans of these games like myself and regularly conversed with them. This became the impetus of wanting to write about games and review them for a living. While I have done this as a hobby in my free time throughout my school days and into college, *Gadgets* allowed me to do this professionally for the first time back in 2012, and I have brought many game reviews and the history of technology to you, the readers. After reviewing so many games, talking about them online, and working hard to give you the lowdown on gaming and technology history, we arrive at a remaster that has been the subject of a cult following and has brought life to a franchise long considered abandoned until recently: *Suikoden*.



Storytelling in games is often a controversial subject, with gamers getting into debates over whether a story makes the game playable or even enjoyable. While often overlooked due to other critically acclaimed games in the genre, the *Suikoden* series is a retelling of the classical Chinese novel *Water Margin*. Both of these games take place in the same universe, and you can name your main character, castle, and army, whatever you want. The Gate Rune War is the setting of *Suikoden* and involves Tir McDohl, the son of the Scarlet Moon Empire's Teo McDohl, who is set on a path that will determine the fate of the Empire as it fights a group of dissidents called the Liberation Army. The Dunan Unification War takes place three years after the first game and puts you in the shoes of Riou, who is caught in the crossfire between the City-States of Jowston and the Highland Kingdom.

Each game is structured similarly: you field a party of six, participate in war battles, and duel with major opponents in the game. At some point in both games, you will acquire and build out a castle based on the number of people you recruit. While some characters join as you progress through the story, you will have to go out of your way to recruit others. Some of these characters are missable if you progress past a certain point in the game, while others are pretty cryptic to recruit. There are also fun minigames in your castle, such as a dice game that allows you to make money, and even an entire cooking sidequest in *Suikoden II*. While the first game is pretty barren outside of the story itself and some minigames and collectibles, you have a plethora of things to explore in the second game.



In typical RPGs, you find weapons and armor in the world and give them to your characters to upgrade. Given that you have to collect 108 characters, the games have something unique: upgradable weapons. You can level your weapons to a maximum of level 16, and also attach a plethora of Runes to your characters to allow them to cast magic or enhance their abilities. In the second game, you can attach as many as three to some characters, allowing for some pretty wild experimentation with certain characters, such as making them an unstoppable physical fighter or a magic-wielding force of destruction. In the second game, you can even attach Runes to your weapons, giving them an elemental attack or enhancing their attack power. Some characters come equipped with unique runes. Another aspect unique to the franchise is Unites, which allows two or more characters to unleash powerful attacks on enemies.

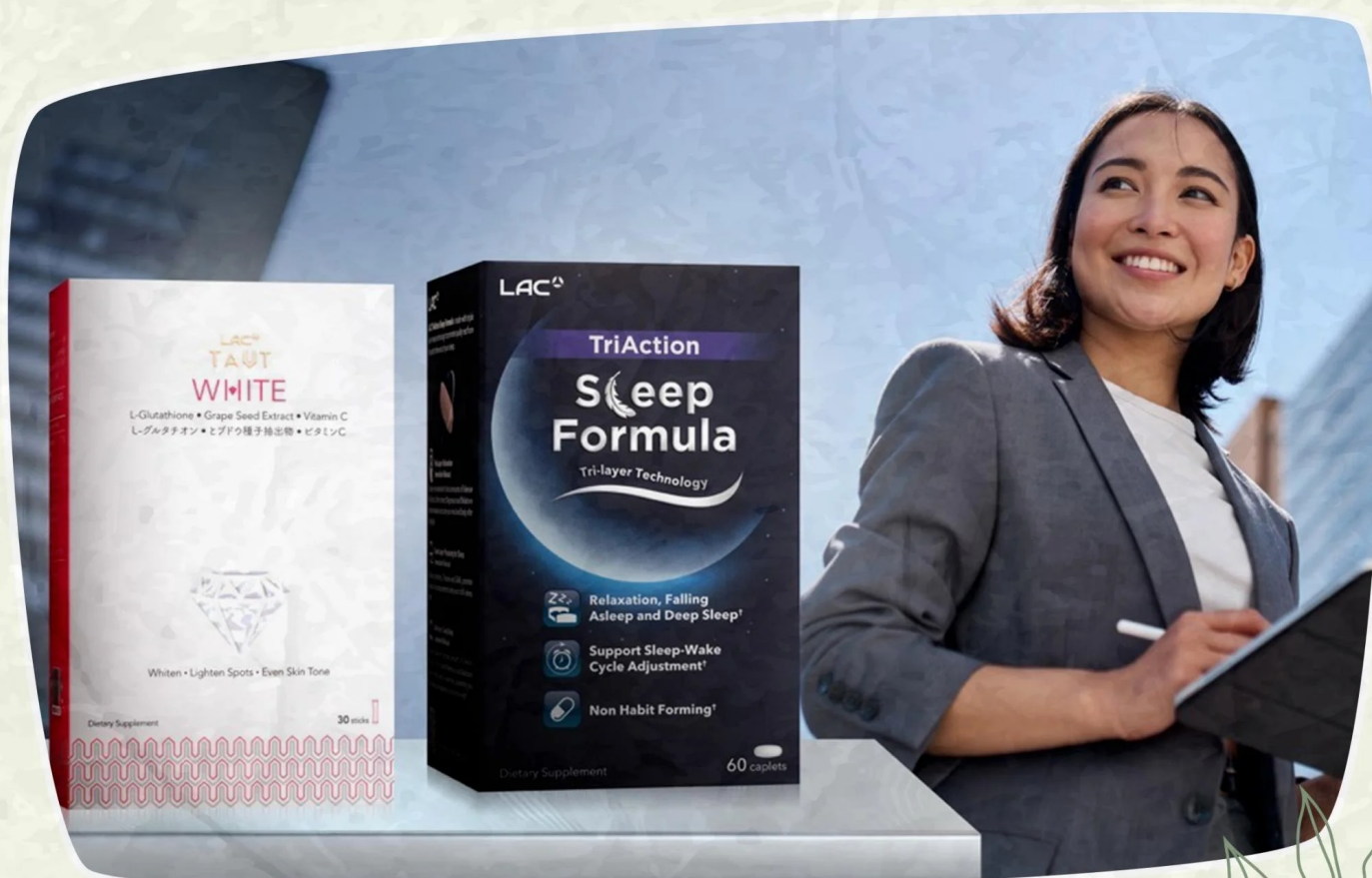


War battles differ in both games as well: *Suikoden* has a rock, paper, scissors-esque war battle system: Charge beats Bow, Bow beats Magic, and Magic beats Charge, while there are specialists that can also aid you in battle. Ninjas and thieves can predict the next enemy move; strategists can increase your attack power; merchants can convince enemies to defect, and more. In *Suikoden II*, war battles become more tactical and take place on a chess-like grid where you can customize your units into infantry and cavalry as you wish and grant them special abilities depending on who is in your unit.

Another strong suit of this game is its music. While considered a bit dated by today's standards, the music is nothing short of amazing and sets the tone of each story event, whether happy or tragic. While the first game had only a few tracks, the second game expanded greatly on the variety of music, ranging from happy to sad and in between.

While this remaster is mostly bringing PlayStation JRPGs to a new generation with visual updates and better localization, Konami has also announced brand-new content for the franchise for the first time in nearly a decade and a half. The remasters are a great step in the right direction for a franchise that has gained a modest yet dedicated following over the years, including myself.

REST & RADIA SLEEP FOR WOMEN



It is no secret that, with so many expectations placed on their shoulders, women need extra support and care to fulfill their responsibilities while also maintaining their well-being. As they juggle multiple roles, women's needs will vary. Whether it's staying sharp and productive or maintaining a vibrant glow, these can be achieved by fostering holistic well-being, where quality sleep plays a crucial role.

ANCE: QUALITY EN'S WELLBEING

In celebration of Women's Month, we recognize the multifaceted roles women play in society, constantly balancing professional duties with personal well-being. On average, Filipinos work **40.9 hours** per week while only getting **6.13 hours** of sleep per night. Despite being praised for their resilience in shouldering various jobs and social commitments, this relentless pace, as noted by the **Global Sleep Care Centre Inc.**, masks a growing sleep crisis. Insufficient and poor-quality sleep is becoming the norm, particularly among those in high-pressure jobs and night shift workers, where rest is often compromised.

This is especially unfortunate for women, who need more sleep. According to an **article by the Sleep Foundation**, women experience more fragmented and lower-quality sleep due to a combination of societal norms and biological factors. These include caregiving responsibilities that require them to wake up during the night, and chronic pain, which women are more likely to experience such as migraines, fibromyalgia, and rheumatoid arthritis. Pain also tends to disrupt sleep more during menstruation and pregnancy, making quality rest even harder to achieve.

The effects of sleep deprivation go beyond fatigue. **Lack of quality sleep** disrupts the skin's natural barrier function, leading to dryness, premature

aging, and worsening skin conditions. It also impairs cognitive function, reducing focus, efficiency, and overall well-being. While getting enough sleep is crucial, it doesn't always equate to feeling truly rested. **Sleep quality**—often influenced by work stress, financial concerns, and digital distractions—can be just as important as sleep duration in achieving restorative rest.

Countless resources emphasize the importance of good sleep and skin health, often recommending **habits** like establishing a relaxing bedtime routine, optimizing the sleep environment, limiting caffeine and alcohol, exercising regularly, and managing stress. While these lifestyle adjustments are essential, targeted supplementation can also help further enhance sleep quality and skin vitality.

Committed to helping Filipinos stay well and live life to the fullest, LAC Philippines offers science-backed, natural supplements designed to support these needs. **LAC TriAction Sleep Formula** combines GABA, Melatonin, Valerian Root, and Magnesium to help alleviate insomnia, minimize sleep disruptions, and promote deep, restorative rest. With its triple-layer sleep technology, it supports each stage of the sleep cycle, enhancing daytime productivity and mood balance so you wake up refreshed and ready to take on the day. Plus, it is

non-habit forming, making it a safe and sustainable choice for improving sleep quality.

For skin health, **LAC Taut* White** is formulated with L-Glutathione, Grape Seed Extract, Olive Leaf Extract, Vitamin C, and Artichoke Extract to help reduce dark spots and imperfections, revealing a brighter, clearer complexion. This advanced skin-whitening supplement works from within to promote a translucent, radiant glow. Suitable for all ages and skin types, its convenient powder formula makes it an effortless addition to any beauty routine. Simply mix one stick daily with juice or your favorite beverage for easy consumption. For best results, pair it with LAC Taut Rejuvenate+ Premium Collagen to support skin firmness and amplify your skin's radiance.

The connection between sleep and skin health is clear: quality rest fuels the body's natural regeneration process, promoting healthy and youthful skin.

With the demands of the world we live in, everyone—especially women—can benefit from an extra boost, whether it's for restorative sleep or skin nourishment. Healthy habits, combined with additional care and support, foster a holistic wellness lifestyle—one that nurtures vitality and long-term health for a better quality life.

A LEGACY OF SUSTAINABILITY

The grand opening of the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden
at De La Salle University

MLhuillier Botanical Garden, settled in the heart of De La Salle University, has officially opened its doors. This remarkable addition to the university campus aims to create a green sanctuary where students, faculty, and visitors can connect with nature, find solace, and celebrate the beauty of life while promoting environmental awareness. The M Lhuillier Botanical Garden is a tribute from Michael L. Lhuillier to the Alma Mater of his beloved father, Michel J. Lhuillier.





Michel J. Lhuillier, affectionately known as “Señorito,” a distinguished alumnus of De La Salle College High School, class of 1959, and holder of a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, class of 1964, has been a visionary leader in sustainability and a passionate advocate for the preservation of flora and fauna. Under his leadership as Chairman of the Board, the M Lhuillier Group has consistently demonstrated a steadfast commitment to economic growth and sustainable practices, exemplified by the establishment of the Cebu Safari in 2018.

At the heart of this initiative is a unique collaboration that has brought a touch of Cebu to the bustling streets of Manila. A truckload of plants were driven from Michel J. Lhuillier’s backyard in Cebu to the Taft Ave campus of De La Salle University. These plants, carefully selected from Lhuillier’s personal collection, were used to beautify and enrich the Botanical Garden.

Amidst the bustling campus of DLSU, the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden will be a haven of tranquility and natural beauty. The garden boasts a diverse collection of flora, with many of the plants carefully cultivated from Cebu Safari, the premier zoological and botanical garden in the Philippines.

Visitors will admire vibrant blooms and lush foliage native to the region. Meticulously curated open space gardens showcase the indigenous flora. A serene pond provides a peaceful oasis.

Beyond its natural wonders, the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden features several noteworthy attractions that add to its charm. The Amphitheater, with its graceful design and natural backdrop, will serve as a venue for various events, performances, and gatherings. The Marian Quadrangle, centered around a blessed virgin statue reminiscent of Gallant designs, features calm Corinthian columns evoking classic beauty. Additionally, the Brothers’ Memorial Garden will honor the heritage and contributions of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, a testament to the university’s rich history and values. The Brothers’

Memorial Garden now blended seamlessly into the landscape with varied foliage heights and textures. Red anthuriums and mayana throughout were selected by Señorito Michel to represent his family brand and Cebu Safari, where distinctive African talisay flanks the entrance.

Stone elements like the imposing Araal Stone used in Safari and fine marble chips on walkways were chosen to connect La Salle’s heritage naturally with the surroundings. Sustainable methods like sturdy drought-resistant plants needing little upkeep alongside natural deterrents help maintain this sanctuary with minimal impact. Overall, through its soothing water features, varied flora and thoughtful symbolic details, the garden aims to instill feelings of tranquility, cultural appreciation and environmental stewardship in all who experience its beauty.

The establishment of the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden also highlights the visionary leadership of De La Salle University’s esteemed individuals, who have been instrumental in transforming this ambitious project into reality. Special recognition goes to Br. Bernard S. Oca FSC, President of DLSU; Dr. Robert C. Roleda, Provost; Mr. Ramon G. Trajano, Senior Vice President (2022-2023); Ms. Kai Shan L. Fernandez, Vice President for Administration; and Mr. Edwin Theodoro C. Reyes, Executive Director for Advancement & Alumni Relations. Their unwavering dedication and collaborative spirit have breathed life into the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden, creating a timeless oasis that promises to inspire and captivate visitors for generations to come.

More than just a beautifully landscaped space, the M Lhuillier Botanical Garden embodies our shared responsibility to protect and celebrate the natural world. It serves as a sanctuary where dreams take root, inspiration flourishes, and the beauty of nature invites us to reflect on the profound connections we share with our environment. Here, amidst the vibrant flora, visitors can find solace and rejuvenation, reminding us of the significance of nurturing our planet for future generations.

CAMPI PARTNERS WITH ANGAT BUHAY IN CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc. (CAMPI) has announced its partnership with Angat Buhay, a non-profit non-government organization dedicated to uplifting communities across the country, to support their climate action and sustainability initiatives. As part of this collaboration, CAMPI has donated PHP500,000 to Angat Buhay to fund programs that aid disaster-prone areas and promote environmental resilience nationwide.

In a turnover ceremony led by CAMPI president Atty. Rommel Gutierrez, the organization reaffirmed its commitment not just for climate change mitigation but also in adaptation and enforcement through partnerships with non-government organizations (NGOs) like Angat Buhay.

“We are very happy to partner with Angat Buhay in their efforts to assist different communities nationwide, especially for climate change and sustainability initiatives. CAMPI has always been a strong advocate for environmental responsibility, and we believe that working with organizations like Angat Buhay allows us to make a meaningful impact,” said Atty. Gutierrez.

Angat Buhay and Its Climate Action Pillar

Angat Buhay is the one of the largest non-government, non-profit organization in the Philippines, dedicated to empowering communities through education, health, disaster relief, and sustainable livelihood programs. Under its Climate Action & Sustainability pillar, the organization implements initiatives that support



From L-R: CAMPI Vice President Atty. Imelda Abadilla-Brown, CAMPI President Atty. Rommel Gutierrez, Angat Buhay Executive Director Mr. Raffy Magno and CAMPI Treasurer Atty. Louie Soriano.

climate-vulnerable communities by providing disaster resilience training, sustainable livelihood programs, and environmental conservation efforts.

CAMPI's Commitment to Sustainability

As the premier association of automotive manufacturers in the country, CAMPI has consistently championed sustainability and environmental responsibility. A portion of the proceeds from the Philippine International Motor Show (PIMS) is regularly allocated to organizations that align with CAMPI's advocacies, particularly in climate action and disaster response.

Beyond this, CAMPI's member companies also implement their own environmental programs, ranging from carbon footprint reduction, tree-planting initiatives, and water conservation projects to sustainable vehicle production and electric vehicle promotion. This collective

effort ensures that the industry plays an active role in addressing climate challenges.

“We are very grateful to the leadership of CAMPI for this partnership, as it will enable us to deliver various programs and much-needed assistance to disaster-prone areas and vulnerable communities across the country,” said Angat Buhay executive director Raffy Magno.

Strengthening CAMPI's Legacy of Giving

Over the years, CAMPI has supported numerous sustainability and disaster relief programs, reinforcing its commitment to corporate social responsibility. Through partnerships with NGOs, local government units, and industry stakeholders, CAMPI continues to drive meaningful change beyond the automotive sector. For more information about CAMPI's programs and activities, visit www.campiauto.org.



BOSCH DRIVES NEXT-LEVEL INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY IN 2025

Technological advancements enable productivity and innovation. Bosch, a global leader in technology and services, is making these advancements more accessible, offering solutions that support efficiency and simplify everyday tasks.

Bosch's commitment to inspiring innovation drives its positive momentum, addressing evolving everyday needs with practical, reliable, and efficient solutions—whether in driving, construction, or home living.

Transforming Tasks with Bosch Power Tools

Bosch Power Tools empowers professionals and enthusiasts with reliable, high-performance solutions. Introducing its new 18V cordless and measuring tools, Bosch offers great power, versatility, and runtime. The Bosch GSB 18V-65 cordless impact drill, the cornerstone of the 18V series, excels in tough drilling, screwdriving, and masonry tasks.

By integrating advanced battery technology, optimizing motor performance, and expanding

compatibility across an even broader range of tools, Bosch is strengthening this platform to meet the evolving needs of the customers.

Enhancing Journeys with Bosch Mobility Aftermarket

Bosch Mobility Aftermarket redefines road safety and convenience. Its products, including high-performance batteries, filters, brake pads, spark plugs, bulbs, horns, and wiper blades, are crafted to enhance vehicle reliability and passenger safety. By minimizing travel disruptions and boosting efficiency, Bosch keeps every journey smooth and stress-free.

Aside from continuous effort to provide the most comprehensive range of spare parts, Bosch Mobility Aftermarket is expanding its network of workshop services through the growth of its Bosch Car Service, with growing branches across the Philippines.

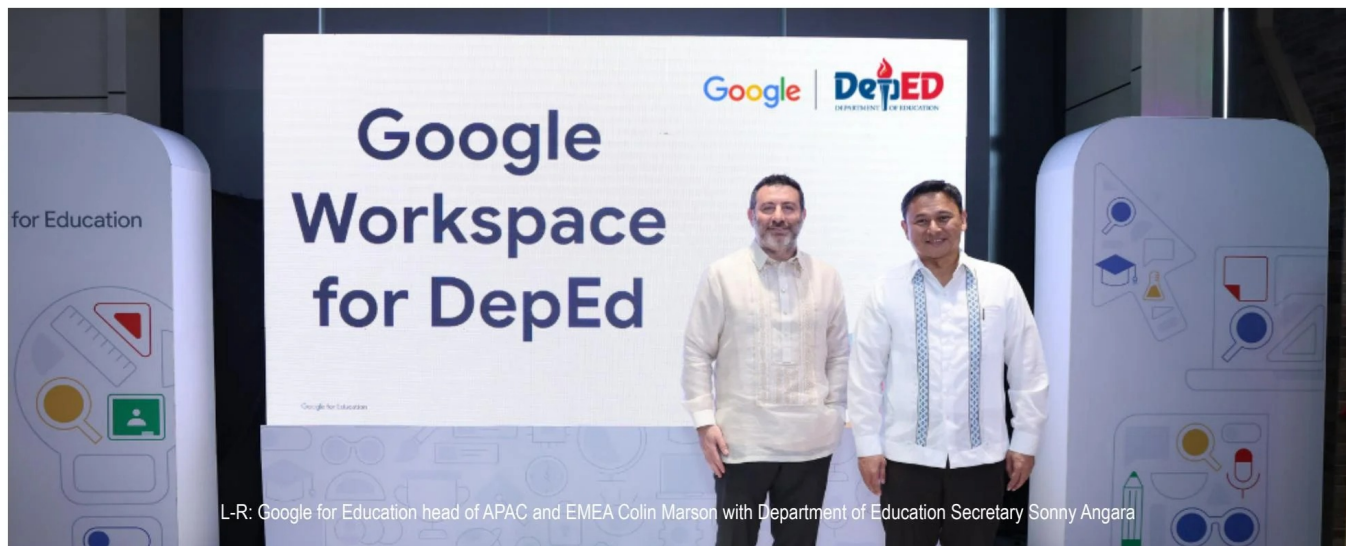
As Bosch approaches its centennial celebration in 2026, the company reflects on a legacy built on innovation, quality, and efficiency.

This remarkable milestone underscores a century of transforming ideas into impactful solutions that have shaped industries and improved lives. In 2025, Bosch is not only honoring this proud heritage but also setting its sights on the future by expanding its product portfolio, embracing cutting-edge innovations, and adapting to the ever-evolving needs of its customers. With a commitment to delivering greater value and driving progress, Bosch is poised to make the next chapter of its journey as impactful as the last.

“Bosch is committed to bringing ‘Invented for Life’ products closer to Filipino consumers, enhancing everyday life with accessible and reliable solutions. Looking ahead to 2025, as we ramp up towards our hundredth year in the Philippines in 2026, Bosch remains focused on empowering Filipinos with top-quality products that improve efficiency and drive progress,” said Paulo Duarte, Managing Director of Bosch Philippines.

For more information about Bosch products and services, visit <https://www.bosch.com.ph/> and follow Bosch Philippines on Facebook.

DEPED COLLABORATES WITH GOOGLE TO EMPOWER TEACHERS



L-R: Google for Education head of APAC and EMEA Colin Marson with Department of Education Secretary Sonny Angara

The Department of Education (DepEd) is taking a major step forward in modernizing its operations by deploying one million “Google Workspace for Education Plus” accounts for its educators and staff. This initiative will enhance efficiency, collaboration, and communication across the department, ultimately benefiting the nation’s public school students.

This strategic move provides DepEd teachers and personnel with access to Google Workspace for Education Plus, a robust suite of cloud-based tools designed to streamline workflows and foster seamless collaboration.

Google Workspace for Education Plus enhances and enriches the capacity of online learning for Filipino students. The suite powers digital worksheets for subjects such as math and English and stimulates original thinking with improved originality reports that detect plagiarism across billions of web pages and over 40 million books.

Teachers will also be able to conduct classes from anywhere with Google Meet while having the flexibility to adjust their teaching with real-time

visibility and analysis of classes and students’ performance.

The Google Workspace for Education Plus solution includes core communication and productivity tools such as Gmail, Classroom, Meet, Calendar, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, and Assignments. In addition, it offers increased Drive capacity for efficient file management and access to Google’s AI-powered assistant, Gemini, for innovative learning experiences. Google Workspace for Education Plus also includes advanced security features to protect teachers and students from digital threats.

This deployment marks a significant upgrade from DepEd’s previous use of Google Workspace for Education Fundamentals since 2012, which offered a foundational set of education and learning tools. This transition underscores DepEd’s commitment to equipping its educators with modern technology to excel.

Department of Education Secretary Sonny Angara said, “Empowering our educators involves fostering a culture of innovation and providing the right tools. By equipping our

teachers and staff with advanced digital capabilities, we’re laying the groundwork for critical thinking, collaboration, efficiency, and creativity in our schools. We extend our sincere thanks to Google for taking us to the forefront of educational innovation.”

Google for Education Head of APAC and EMEA Colin Marson said, “Education is the cornerstone of individual potential, economic growth, and a more equitable society. Google is committed to scaling Google Workspace for Education in classrooms, empowering educators with user-friendly and secure tools that help students reach their full capabilities. We’re honored to collaborate with the Department of Education, supporting their mission of educational innovation.”

Innovate Communications, Inc (Globe) also plays a key role in this partnership as a [Google Workspace reseller](#) in the Philippines.

To learn more about Google Workspace for Education, please visit the official site at <https://edu.google.com/>.

DOUBLEDRAGON TO FULLY SUBSIDIZE SSS CONTRIBUTIONS OF 2,000 INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS IN THE VISAYAS

In a landmark social security partnership, SSS president and chief executive officer Robert Joseph Montes De Claro and DoubleDragon Corporation chairman Edgar “Injap” Sia II formally signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to register DoubleDragon as a Contribution Subsidy Provider.

De Claro thanked DoubleDragon chairman Sia for heeding the call of SSS last January for government and businesses to support Filipino workers and their families through the SSS Contribution Subsidy Provider Program (CSPP).

He said that DoubleDragon would fully subsidize the SSS contributions for 2,000 informal sector workers in Iloilo City and Roxas City for 12 months — a total commitment of P18.2-M — addressing the financial barriers that prevent workers from accessing essential social security benefits.

“This SSS contribution subsidy will not only support the 2,000 recipients but will also benefit their extended families,” De Claro explained. “It will provide these informal sector workers with the opportunity to join the SSS and gain access to its benefits.”

He expressed appreciation and gratitude to DoubleDragon and its Chairman for supporting SSS in their new role as a Contribution Subsidy Provider. “By offering access to social security, DoubleDragon is empowering these informal sector workers to have a safety net to rely on in times of need.”



Social Security System (SSS) president and chief executive officer Robert Joseph Montes De Claro (2nd from left) and DoubleDragon chairman Edgar “Injap” Sia II (3rd from left) formally ink an agreement for the Contribution Subsidy Provider Program on 13 March 2025 at the SSS Main Office in Quezon City. Also in photo are (from left) SSS executive vice president for investments sector Ernesto D. Francisco, Jr. and DoubleDragon legal department head Joselito L. Barrera, Jr.

“After all these years, almost three decades since Mr. Injap Sia took out a corporate loan from SSS in 1997 followed by continuing SSS participation in capital market issuances of DoubleDragon up to the present, we are beaming with pride to have DoubleDragon give back to SSS and Filipino workers as a Contribution Subsidy Provider,” De Claro further said.

Under the CSPP, SSS partners with contribution subsidy providers, who may be private or government entities, who commit to paying the contributions on behalf of selected self-employed workers, land-based Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), and voluntary members of the SSS. The minimum subsidy period under the program is six (6) consecutive months.

As a CSPP partner, DoubleDragon aims to make a significant impact in

the lives of those who need it most - workers in the informal economy.

“I would like to thank PCEO Jay for this contribution program, giving entrepreneurs like me a chance to be able to pay it forward and to be able to assist and help thousands of our countrymen who needed some lift in life,” Sia said.

Sia believes that DoubleDragon’s partnership with the SSS can positively affect thousands of Filipinos. He shared that this collaboration is his way of reciprocating the assistance he received from the SSS when he was an emerging entrepreneur, noting that the SSS provided him with a corporate loan that enabled him to build a 59-room hotel in Iloilo City in 1997.

After 28 years, Sia remains grateful for the credit facility and looks forward to a continuing, meaningful partnership with the SSS in the years ahead.

SIGNIFY DISTRIBUTORS CONFERENCE ILLUMINATES THE FUTURE

In an inspiring display of collaboration and forward-thinking strategy, Signify, formerly known as Philips Lighting, the global leader in lighting, hosted a dynamic distributors conference at Seda Manila Bay. The event brought together over 100 professional distributors, setting the stage for the company's "Race to Growth" initiative—a comprehensive roadmap that merges breakthrough innovation with exceptional customer engagement.

During the conference, Signify unveiled its strategic plans for 2025, signaling a year of new product innovations and sustainable solutions. The company is set to invest even more in research and development to pioneer next-generation lighting and digital solutions. By expanding its distribution channels and harnessing data-driven insights, Signify aims to meet the evolving needs of customers in both emerging and established markets. In addition, comprehensive training initiatives and enhanced after-sales support will be rolled out to empower professional partners, ensuring that every client benefits from the full spectrum of Signify's expertise.

A key product highlight was the expanded Philips SmartBright All-In range. These luminaires integrate three color temperatures and three lumen packages in one product. For contractors, this means faster project completion with adjustable lumen output and color temperature during installation, ensuring the right lighting without delays. For wholesalers, fewer SKUs mean lower costs and optimized inventory, while still meeting installer and contractor needs. The SmartBright All-In range



simplifies selection, reduces costs, and ensures the right lighting every time.

Further cementing its position as a brand leader, Signify reaffirmed its commitment to innovative innovation and excellence by partnering with the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS F1 team. The partnership is set to drive new programs designed to enhance the overall customer experience for Signify Professionals, delivering cutting-edge solutions and elevated service that reflect both brands' dedication to quality and sustainability.

Signify further underscored its commitment to its partner network by awarding its Top Partners of 2024 and renewing its partnership with all its partners for 2025. This gesture, formalized with signed certificates, not only recognized the exceptional contributions of its top performers but also affirmed the company's dedication to a unified and collaborative future. Every partner now stands as a vital contributor

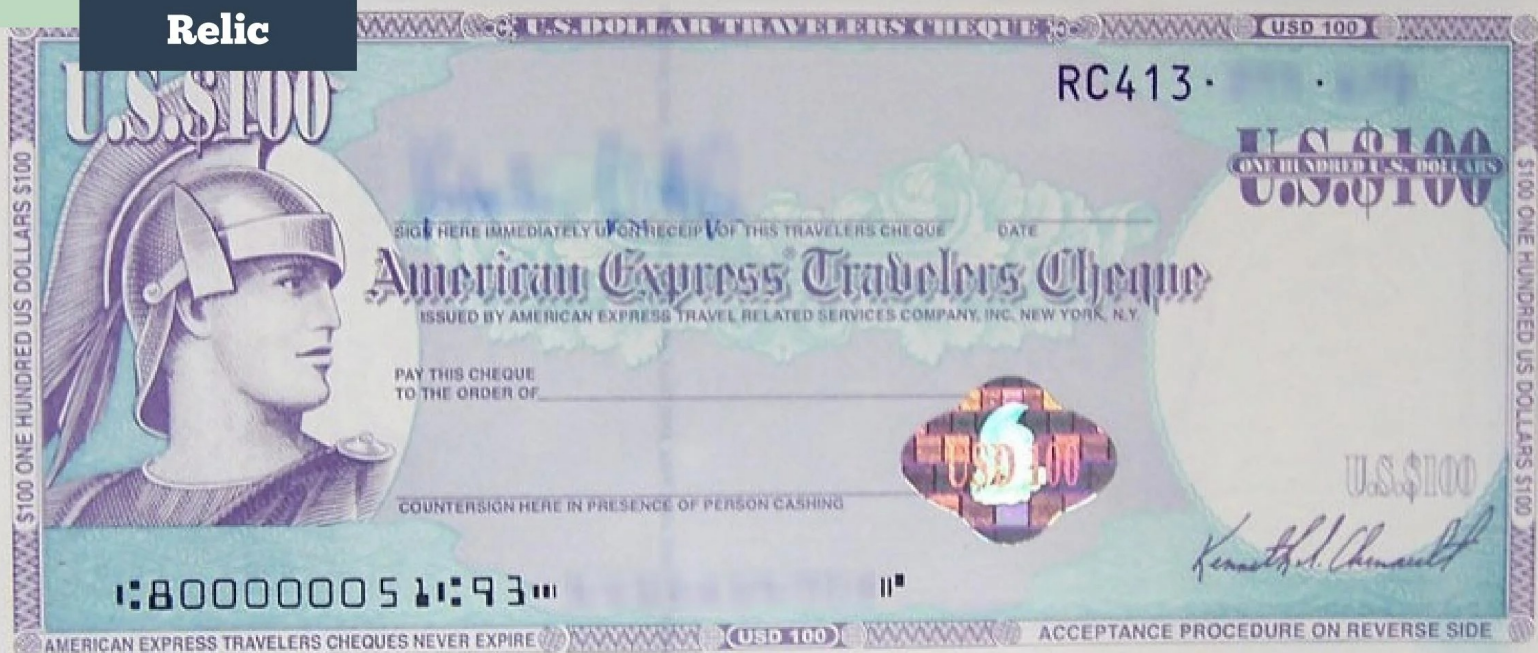
to Signify's shared journey toward innovation and excellence.

Raghuraman Chandrasekhar, country leader for professional business, Signify Philippines, emphasized that these partnerships are the cornerstone of the company's journey. "Our partners are essential to our journey. Together, we are building a future based on thoughtful innovation and shared success," he stated.

Looking ahead, Signify is set to deliver consistent value throughout 2025 by maintaining a balanced focus on innovation, sustainable growth, and enhanced customer experience. The company remains dedicated to providing high-quality lighting solutions that not only meet industry standards but also contribute to a greener, more sustainable future.

To get more updates and to send your inquiries on how to be an authorized Signify partner, kindly visit www.signify.com/en-ph.

Relic



TRAVELER'S CHECK

Words by Jose Alvarez

Traveling around the world may take a huge bite out of your wallet, but the benefits greatly outweigh the costs. Whether you visit a popular tourist destination such as Paris or Las Vegas or something off the beaten path, travel benefits people in a variety of ways, such as meeting different people and cultures and broadening one's perspective.

But, back to the wallet part: we all know that different parts of the world use different currencies. The Philippines uses the peso, the United States uses the dollar, and countries everywhere use a different national currency. As of this writing, you can get around 58 PHP to 1 USD. This can still be confusing today, as you can get a different exchange rate when going to various currency exchange stores; each store may have its own exchange rate. How did one resolve this before the advent of places where you can change pesos to dollars (or vice versa)? I found the traveler's check, something I had heard of before but had never used or really looked into at all.

Traveler's checks were first issued on January 1, 1772, by the London Credit Exchange Company. They were used in

over 90 European cities. Keep in mind that this predated many forms of travel that we know today, namely the train, so it took considerably longer for people to travel even within a relatively small geographical area such as Europe. This lay dormant until the middle to late 19th century when now-defunct United Kingdom-based travel agency Thomas Cook (then Thomas Cook & Son) issued what they called "circular notes" as a way of managing currency changes. Across the Atlantic, American Express introduced them in 1891 to replace letters of credit.

How did they work? One had to pre-sign a traveler's check, which was its own document. Then, one got a receipt and other documentation for a traveler's check, which had to be kept separate from the traveler's check — which, like many of the things featured in Relic, looks cumbersome by today's standards. However, this was beneficial in that one could easily replace traveler's checks if they ever got lost or stolen, much like you need a receipt to return or exchange any sort of product that you buy at a store. These came in a variety of currencies, but mostly in denominations of 20, 50, or 100 of said currency sold in packs of five or ten. Traveler's checks also did not expire, so you could hold on to

them forever; today, you can deposit them in your bank account. In financial terms, it is considered an interest-free loan to the issuer.

The traveler's check, while popular with travelers, began to decline in use with the issue of credit cards, debit cards, and (in more recent times) mobile wallets that store data from your credit cards and debit cards. The rise of the Internet and associated financial technology allowed people to withdraw their money at any foreign ATM (with fees, of course), so whether you were vacationing in a developed or developing country, you were able to access money faster and more conveniently.

Many businesses stopped accepting traveler's checks in the 1990s, and their use practically dissipated at the turn of the millennium, although some reports had them being used as late as the late 2000s to early 2010s. The traveler's check has largely laid the groundwork for foreign travelers to use their debit or credit cards no matter where they go, and thankfully, instead of carrying tons of documents around, you can just use a credit or debit card to pay for your vacation and souvenirs for everyone back home.

THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST TECH LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

GADGETS MAGAZINE

Volume XXV Issue VIII

MEET THE TEAM

EDITORIAL

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